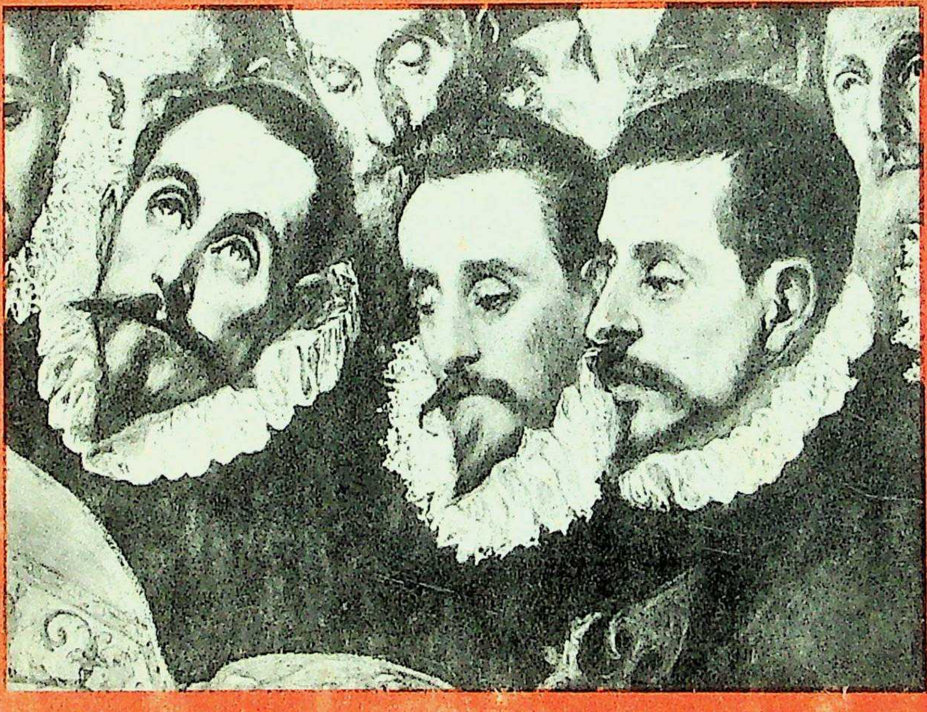
DISCUSSIONS ON ART

A
18

SPANISH PAINTING

Philip Hendy

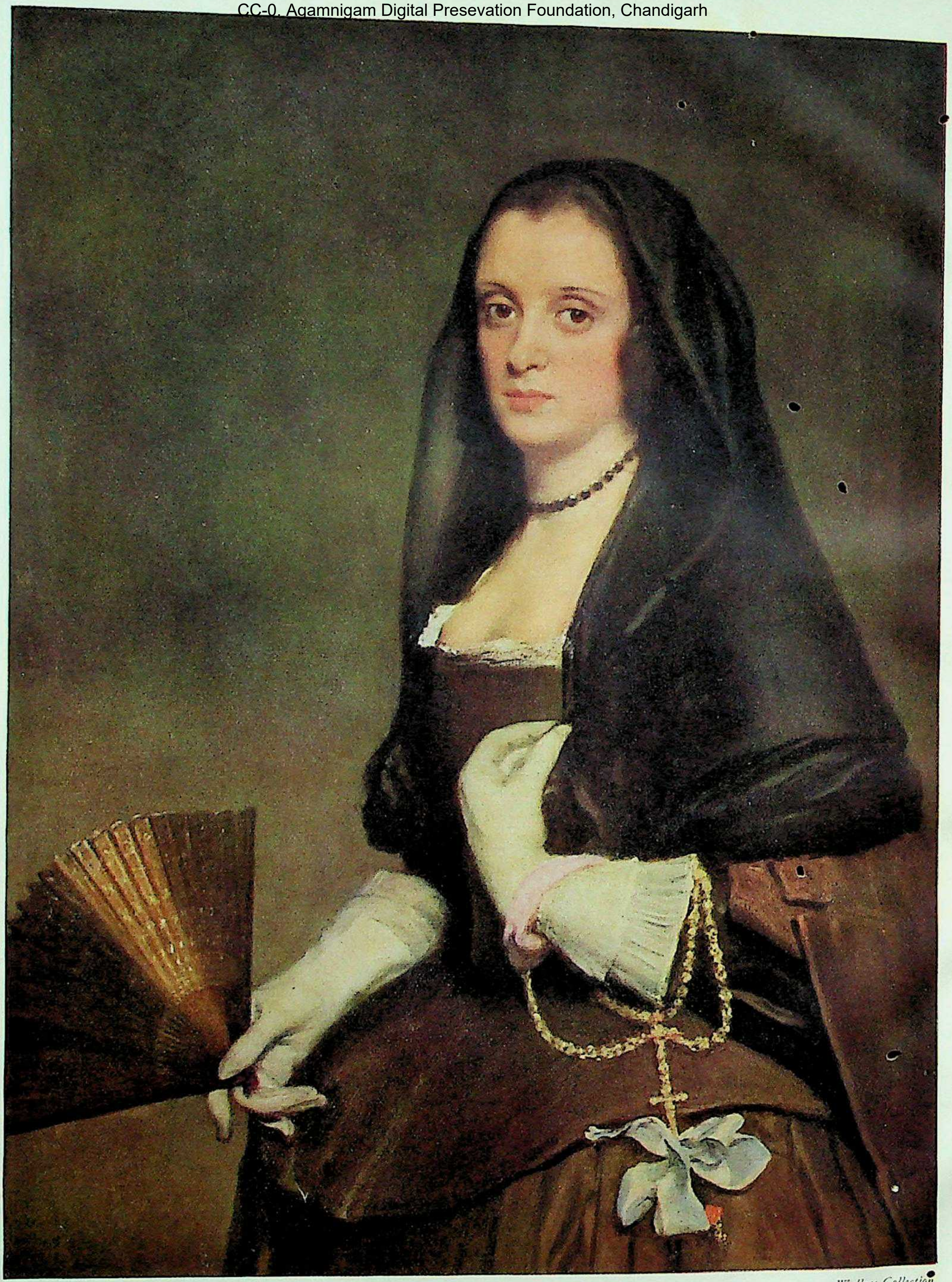


37 PLATES: COLOUR & PHOTOGRAVURE

A.E.BARLOW N.R.D.

SPANISH PAINTING

PHILIP HENDY



Frontispiece

Wallace Collection

THE LADY WITH A FAN *By* VELAZQUEZ (1599-1660)

Original $36\frac{1}{2}'' \times 26\frac{7}{8}''$

SPANISH PAINTING

PHILIP HENDY

DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY LONDON

WITH 38 PLATES IN COLOUR AND MONOCHROME

AVALON PRESS: AND COLLINS

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FOREWORD

I AM very grateful to Mr. Neil MacLaren, who has made many needed improvements to my manuscript and has been so kind as to correct the proofs. The Bibliography is his work.

P. H.

January, 1946.

NOTE ON NATIONALITY

THERE has been, in this series of Discussions on Art, one general principle for the problems of alternative nationality: that the painter concerned should have his place in the volume on the national School of Painting to which he devoted the bulk of his working lifetime. Thus, the French volume includes some artists born in England or elsewhere who not only belonged to the ubiquitous School of Paris, but lived most of their lives in France; and the British volume includes American expatriates who made the greater part of their artistic careers in England.

The authors of the text, however, have been given full freedom to discuss or (where space permits) illustrate any painter whom they claim as part of their subject. There has been some inevitable overlapping at the point where art transcends nationality, with the result that a few famous painters are in more than one of the volumes.

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SPANISH PAINTING

CHAPTER I

EVERY painter is part of a great tradition. Tradition is not a line, divisible into convenient lengths, but a great ball, always growing in dimensions. Whichever way one slices it, for the sake of convenient mental digestion, the piece cannot be nearly complete in itself. There is therefore no entirely satisfactory method of dividing up the world's painters in order to study their history. If we divide them into nations, while doing so we must remember that nations are a more transient phenomenon than art, and that, even when they have become firmly established, the time is often more important in art than the place. Thus a picture of Roger van der Weyden (1400–1464) from Brussels may be hung alongside a picture by Bermejo (working 1474–1495) from Barcelona, or one by Rubens (1577–1640) from Antwerp beside one by El Greco (1541–1614) from Toledo; and there will be no jar. In each case one may even help in the appreciation of the other, for they have in common their age's idea of beauty, and the idea is all the more impressive for being presented in more ways than one. There are differences of every category, from the religious to the technical; but they are so slight that they have to be discovered by observation; unlike those which leap to the eye if we hang the Van der Weyden beside the Rubens or the Bermejo beside the El Greco. In these cases there is something in common in religion; but there is a wide gulf in art, in art as a technical product, as the form given to man's abstract idea of beauty, as the expression of his relation to life.

We might understand history better if our great national collections were less nationalistic in their arrangement. Since art is the universal language, a new arrangement to show what men have thought and dreamed in common might be of more use to the world in its present condition than the old method of emphasising the boundaries which have kept their minds apart. A merely chronological division, however, might prove no better than the national; for the currents between artists can transcend period as well as place.

Moreover, what artists have in common, what makes their pictures hang together well, is not necessarily what is deepest, and certainly not what is most intense, in their arts. The theory that beauty is a pure thing, existing in complete detachment from associations, would cut us off, if we could really bound ourselves by it, from infinite enjoyment and opportunities of understanding. Just as we know a man better by knowing his occupation and his surroundings, so we understand an art better by discovering its purpose and the soil in which it has grown.

All art is in some degree the expression of individuality. In painting, the individuality of the artist is almost the same thing as the subtlety of his art. We get a first clue to the individuality of a painter if we study the soil in which he has grown. From that point of view there is much in the nationalist method of art history. Its fault is that it is not only too petty, ignoring the universal, but too vague, not sufficiently particularising the soils. The great artist is very rarely a nationalist. More than any other man, probably, he grows from his immediate surroundings, loving the sights and sounds and smells of his daily life, the habits of his town or village. From these and from the tradition that he inherited during his apprenticeship he makes

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his art. Out of these and his genius is made his personality. What he adds of the universal may come to him across the most distant boundaries of space or time.

There is no country whose art demonstrates this interlocking of the local with the universal, of the particular with the traditional, better than Spain. The country itself lies on the fringe of Europe, cut off at the one point of land contact by a great range of mountains, and given a special character of starkness by the great height at which so much of its bare soil lies, under the grilling sun. The mountains not only cut it off from Europe, but also divide it into many strongly individual parts; and the effort to overcome the resulting separatism has led to a further accentuation of nationalism. In each of the great artists that we have to study, therefore, the national characteristics are so strong as to make them seem at first sight to stand out like awkward peninsulas in the neat map of the European tradition. It gives one quite a shock to come across even Velázquez' portrait of Pope Innocent X in the Doria Gallery in Rome, or Goya's of the Duke of Wellington in an English country-house, or Picasso's *Guernica* in the Paris exhibition for which it was intended. Each seems more than alien to its surroundings, to regard them with fierce contempt. Yet each of these artists has drawn much in the first place from the European tradition, and each in turn has contributed to it as much again.

Picasso (born 1881), indeed, has so dominated the scene for more than a generation that one scarcely thinks of him as a Spaniard. Yet Spaniard he is. The French may make the larger claim that Paris is the centre of the world's art; but not the lesser that Picasso, its leader, is a Frenchman. It is the Spaniard in him that carries to its extreme every succeeding abstraction. Or rather, it is the Catalan. Spain is a nation of several peoples, and local character is stronger there to-day than anywhere else. Madariaga, in his book on Spain, has chosen Goya, with his spontaneity and frankness, his intuitive, unintellectual understanding, his pride and individualism, as the perfect type of Aragonese. Perhaps one could find no better example of the Castilian, the central, normal type of Spaniard, than Velázquez, with his aristocratic reserve, his nonchalant detachment, his realism and incapacity for abstractions. His would be the patriotism of the immigrant. He was born in Andalusia; but his heart was set upon Madrid from the first. Goya, the direct inspiration first of Delacroix and then of Manet, and Velázquez, partly through Goya and in part directly, are the principal founders of the great tradition of the later 19th century, the French tradition that Picasso came to inherit in France. Such is the roundness of the ball.

Picasso will be discussed at length, not in this volume, but in that on *Modern Painting*. It is Velázquez (1599–1660) and Goya (1746–1828) of whom most people think when they refer to Spanish painting; for it is these two who have made Spain's great contribution to the European tradition—these two and El Greco, who was a Greek by birth and a Venetian by training, but who evolved his art in Spain. It was more than two centuries before El Greco's painting became known outside his adopted country, and more than three before its influence was visible on another great painter. In his own day even Rubens, who paid his first visit to Spain while El Greco was painting at the height of his power in Toledo, neither included nor excepted him in his castigation of contemporary Spanish painters. But El Greco is the earliest painter who eventually contributed to the central tradition from Spain.

Since so brief a history of Spanish painting as this must concern itself chiefly with such contributions, it might well begin with him; but that would be to exclude a great number of beautiful pictures painted while the flow of ideas was all the other way. Though these may make no contribution to the sum of ideas

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in painting, they go to swell the number of the world's great pictures. Incidentally, they demonstrate how international an art can be when there is an idea bigger than nationalism to give it inspiration.

The original home of Spanish culture was in the South, whence until at least the 11th century the Moors dominated all Spain. Long after that, in the kingdoms from which they had been driven their influence was visible in architecture and the industrial arts. Painting, however, advanced with the militant Christian religion, southwards from the South of France; and until the advent of El Greco all the finest painting was to be found in Catalonia or in Aragon. The 12th-century wall-paintings from Catalan churches which are preserved in the museums at Barcelona and at Boston, U.S.A., represent Romanesque painting at its farthest geographical point from its eventual place of origin, Byzantium; but they seem far less provincial than most of the Gothic painting which was to follow. The recent triumphs of religion gave conviction to the artists who had to depict its heroes and martyrs; the fresco technique in all its simplicity suited their naturally stark expression; while the Moorish influence is perhaps responsible for their decorative sense, and certainly for their strong colour. Romanesque wall-painting has otherwise almost disappeared from Europe, and these are among its finest remains. In the panel paintings of the same period, however, one misses both the subtleties of technique and the germ of new, adventurous ideas about the scope of painting which are to be found in the pictures of the same type in Italy.

With the Proto-Renaissance which grew out of them in Italy, to culminate in the early 14th century in Giotto's work, or with the Italian Renaissance itself, there is no parallel in Spain. There was no such intellectual ferment there; and not until Picasso went to France was a Spanish-born painter interested in abstractions. Consequently the Gothic interlude, which in Italy produced great painters like Duccio and Simone Martini and the Lorenzetti in a short space of time before it gave way to the Renaissance, lasted in Spain throughout the 14th and 15th centuries.

It began brilliantly. The beautiful fresco decoration of the chapel of the Franciscan convent of Pedralbes, painted for the King of Aragon in 1345–46, would be taken for the work of some great Tuscan painter if documents did not prove it to be by Ferrer Bassa (*c.* 1290–after 1348), a Catalan who is known to have worked in every medium, though nothing else by him has survived. Simone Martini, whose influence here is predominant, had worked and died not long before at the Papal Court in Avignon; but there is also probably a reflection from Giotto. Bassa must have served his apprenticeship in Italy. A certain coarseness and monotony of feature in his figures hint at provinciality; but there is nothing that can be identified as Spanish. His sense of form and colour and of organised design separates him from all other Spanish painters for more than a century. The Gothic altar-pieces which spread from Catalonia all over Spain were only the most provincial manifestation of a style which became international during the later 14th and 15th centuries. The abstract qualities which made them elsewhere a thing of beauty, the flowing line and brilliant decorative colour, were quite alien to the Spanish temperament. The elaborate reredos (*retablo*) which became characteristic in Spain was more frame than picture; and the picture itself, painted in few colours against a gilded background, was too heavily loaded with embossed and gilded ornaments to express more than material splendour diluted with a weak romanticism.

Recuperation from these orgies of gilt and chivalry came with the influence of the great Flemish painters of the 15th century. *The*

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Madonna with the Councillors at Barcelona, dated 1445, and signed by Luis Dalmau, is impressive in its stern realism; but it is made up of pieces practically copied from pictures by Van Eyck. Dalmau had been sent to the Netherlands by the King of Aragon.

One can see the gradual conversion of an artist of real character in the development of Bartolomé Bermejo,† the greatest painter whom Spain produced before El Greco. He seems to have been born at Córdoba; but the record of his working life (1474–95) comes from Daroca near Saragossa, from Saragossa itself, and finally from Barcelona. His earlier altarpieces are of the traditional kind, divided up by frames like rood-screens, the backgrounds of the separate panels gilded, and the figures themselves sprouting with embossed ornament. But the Saints have a new rude strength in their sculptured bones and in their grave, angular features. At the other end of his career, the *Pietà*, in Barcelona Cathedral, painted in 1490, is a wide panorama, in which St. Jerome and the donor kneel before the Madonna mourning over the body of her Son. Their figures are lit by the setting sun consistently, and the landscape under a stormy sky, across which a flight of geese is winging homeward, is rich in every kind of life, but richer still in light and shade, in tone and colour. The medium is oil, and there is nothing in the picture, from the broad idea of the composition to the very textures reproduced in great variety, that is not due to Roger van der Weyden. Only a certain sternness of character is Spanish. Inferior Spanish painting is inclined to mawkish sentimentality and stylistic affectation. The great Spanish painters are all realists.

CHAPTER II

IN the 16th century Spain became the first Power of the world. In a few years after the discovery of America and of the sea routes to the East she built herself a vast new empire overseas. Even more suddenly she came to dominate Europe when Charles, the grandson of Ferdinand and Isabella, first inherited half of Italy, part of what is now France, and the Low Countries, and then, by getting himself elected Emperor Charles V, joined all this and Spain with Central Europe. The empire overseas, or a great part of it, lasted for nearly three centuries, largely because it lay so far away that the ideas of the brilliant missionary teachers and administrators could not be entirely frustrated from the capital. But in Europe this one great opportunity for union by means which were both peaceful and legitimate was lost, almost before it had occurred, through Spain's rigid lack of understanding.

The unity which she had achieved within herself was not so much political or economic as religious; and it was by religion that Charles sought to unify, and actually divided, Europe. Spain's religion was a menace to progress, a war against ideas, which brought intellectual and moral atrophy wherever its victory was won. By a happy accident, however, the hatred took no account of painting. In so far as it had been a popular art, painting had served the established religion.

In so far as it had served the humanism of the Renaissance and become a vehicle of individual expression, it had been an art only for great princes. The Emperor Charles V and his son King Philip II of Spain, who cared nothing for literature or music and were ignorant of science, who liked to pass their days in monastic cells, became addicts to Venetian painting. By a happy irony their doleful Most Catholic Majesties were the agents through whom the rest of Europe

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† Colour Plate 2 and Plate 6

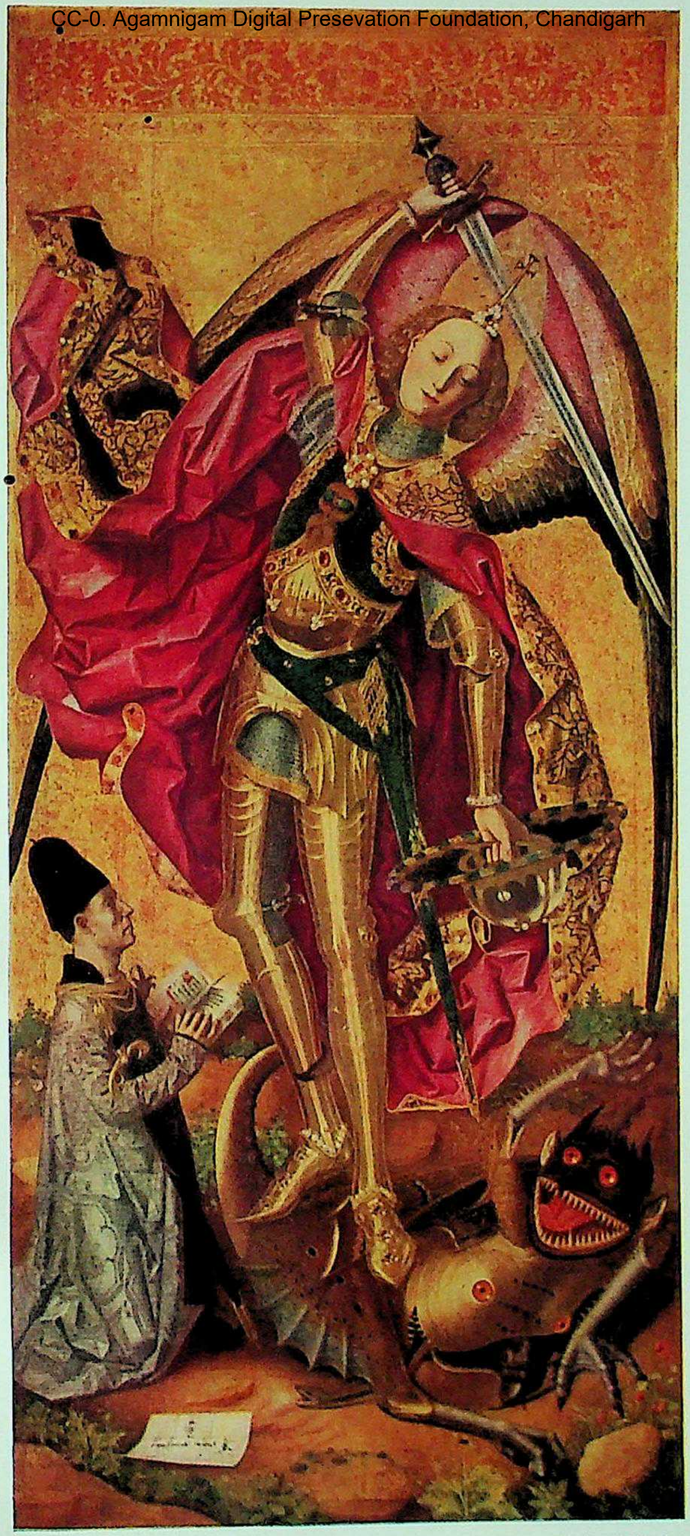

Plate 2

Sir Harold Wernher

ST. MICHAEL *By BERMEJO* (Wkg 1474-1495)

Original 70″ × 31¾″.

became acquainted with the most passionately sensuous and freely expressive form of art which has ever been invented. In the process the royal palaces in Madrid became the greatest repositories of painting.

Charles would never have heard of Titian, probably, if the Duke of Ferrara and the Marquis of Mantua had not used his painting as a bait to win the Imperial indulgence towards their precarious little principalities. Titian, moreover, was a true Venetian, a consummate man of the world, who knew how to make the most of such an opportunity. At his first meeting with the Emperor at Bologna he was careful, while using the princely introductions, to cut out the princes themselves and become a member of the Imperial Court. On the next visit, four years later, he was created Count Palatine and a Knight of the Golden Spur. His sumptuous portrait of the Emperor with his mastiff, now in the Prado Museum, was probably the fruit of the first meeting and the earliest in a long series of commissions. It is the prototype for Velázquez' standing portraits of the Emperor's great-grandson, King Philip IV, just as the splendid *Charles V at the Battle of Mühlberg*, painted on a first visit to Augsburg nearly twenty years later, is the prototype of Velázquez' equestrian portraits.

Titian's painting was probably the one thing, besides his food, that the Emperor really enjoyed. When he finally abdicated and retired into the monastery at Yuste, he took his favourite Titians with him. King Philip had had his portrait painted on a second visit of Titian's to Augsburg. From then on for the quarter of a century which the Venetian had still to live, Titian's painting was the King's substitute for life, his compensation for all the deprivations imposed by his religion and his royalty. The Emperor's pictures had been either portraits or altarpieces. The flow of these continued from Titian's studio to the royal palaces or the Escorial for Philip; but it was also for Philip that Titian painted that great series of decorative romances in which he summed up all the sensuous experience of his life.

In these scenes from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* the ripe womanhood which the Venetians were such masters at depicting could be seen, as the craftiest of them all was careful to point out to his patron, from every angle. In time this virtue became an embarrassment to their Most Catholic Majesties. They are very large pictures, not easily put away, and it was impossible for royalty to sell. Philip II himself grew doubtful as old age came on, and tried in vain to give them away to the Emperor Rudolph II. Philip IV was more nearly successful, for the future Charles I of England fell more in love with them than with the Infanta whom he had come to see on his hasty visit to Madrid. From this he was just as hastily recalled, and had to leave them all behind in their packing-cases. In the end they were given by Philip V to the Duc de Grammont, who passed them on to the Regent of France, the Duc d'Orléans.

Meanwhile, however, they must have been unpacked and hung again, perhaps by Velázquez, when he was keeper of the royal collection; for Rubens made full-sized copies of them when he paid his second visit, at the height of his career, to the Court of Madrid. He took his copies back with him to Antwerp. The lethargic Velázquez must have been astonished to see the most fertile of all painters, loaded with commissions from all the Courts of Europe, the busy diplomat and industrious scholar, spending laborious hours in copying another man's pictures. He, too, however, left a testimony of devotion. There was no need to invent the spurious attribution to Velázquez of a picture in Count Contini's collection called *Homage to Titian*, for that might just as well be the title of one of his world-famous pictures, *Las Hilanderas*. The brilliant tapestry which is the focal point in that picture is a reproduction of one of the *poesie*, *The Rape of Europa*, now in the Gardner Museum at Boston. In the Gardner Museum also is Van Dyck's water-colour copy made from Rubens' copy in oils. Sir Joshua Reynolds was the owner of an anonymous copy now in the Wallace Collection.

In the Orléans Gallery in Paris Titian's compositions exercised a great imaginative influence upon the French painters of the 18th century. In the royal palace in Madrid it was not so much their composition or their poetry which influenced the Spanish painters, bound as they were to religious subjects and Court portraiture, as the manner of their painting. The Italian picture as it was evolved on wall or wooden panel in Florence and in Rome was not exportable either as a commodity or as an idea. It was the Venetians who invented not only the 'easel picture,' painted in oils on canvas, portable in its portable frame, but an idea of painting which was to prove infinitely adaptable to all Europe. It was the product of a marriage between the Tuscan ideal conception of form, realised primarily through the symbolism of line, and the Flemish realistic representation of light and colour, of the Mediterranean preoccupation with the human figure and the Northern love of nature.

In the fullness of their picture of life, the Venetians covered almost all the passions of mankind. No other people, except perhaps the French of the later 19th century, have had so rich a sensuous life that they could have profited to the full by the Venetian example; but during the 17th century Venetian pictures were scattered, largely by means of the Hapsburg domination, through all Europe, and everywhere that culture was sufficiently developed some painter found in it the courage and the means to express his more limited reaction to his environment. It is no accident that the influence of the Venetians was first manifest in Spain, because it was here that was first to be seen in every one of its varied aspects the painting of Titian, who had evolved out of the technique of Bellini and Giorgione the most varied and elastic method of painting that the world has ever seen.

Needless to say, the freedom from conventions which was Titian's message was not appreciated all at once. The Spaniard Alonso Sánchez Coello † (1531 or 1532–1588), with whom King Philip had to be contented when he could not persuade Titian to leave his beloved Venice, did all that he could. He made copies of some of Titian's pictures, which, as keeper of the royal collection, he had to get unpacked and hung. In his dry, hard way he copied the rich accessories of Titian's earlier portraits into the endless series of portraits of the King and his family which Philip commissioned him to paint. But he had no inspiration, and in the gloom and repression of Philip's Court the royal sitters become more and more pinched and stiff upon his canvases, as their colours grew ever colder and their very dimensions more narrow.

His temperament was much more in sympathy with that of his actual teacher, Antonis Mor, whose pupil he had been in Brussels. Mor's characterisation was severely realistic, and it was under his influence that Coello painted his finest portraits: the *King Philip II in Armour* at the Escorial or the portrait believed to be of Alessandro Farnese † in Dublin. Mor, who was painter to the Court of the Netherlands, and visited Spain about 1550–52, supplied all that was spontaneous in Court-painting in Madrid as it was carried on by Coello, his successor Pantoja de la Cruz and others, until the advent of Velázquez.

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† Plate 7

CHAPTER III

TITIAN died in 1576. In the spring of the following year his former pupil in Venice, El Greco,† settled at Toledo. Not long after his arrival there, probably, he painted the so-called *Dream of King Philip II*, and sent it to the King in his new monastery-palace at Escorial, not far from Madrid, perhaps as an unsolicited sample of what he could do. It can hardly have failed to please; for in it, while mankind in general struggles in the jaws of hell, King Philip, between his father the Emperor and the Spanish Pope, kneels upon cushions at the head of a crowd of Saints.

The result, probably after the number of years essential to the transaction of all royal Spanish business, was the commission for the great *Martyrdom of St. Maurice*. One would expect that this, too, would have delighted the King, that he would have recognised in this rising painter the very man whom he was seeking. El Greco spoke in the language of Titian, in rich oil glazes giving powerful colour. These, however, do not glow as if they had been slowly impregnated with the warm sun, but with cool moonlight, more excited and exciting in its sudden brilliance; for he used the language not to express earthy passions, but the spiritual ecstacies of the religion which governed the King and his kingdom. The tangle of wild flowers beside the stump of a felled tree in the foreground of the *Martyrdom* are not part of Nature's infinite bounty, like the flowers in Venetian pictures, but symbols of the ultimate triumph of the spirit. Wilder and shyer, they have a more precarious footing on the earth. The earth itself is much less substantial than Venetian earth.

El Greco has little interest in the solid substances and the four-square structure from which every great Italian had built his designs. He studied the structure of the body as carefully as any Venetian, even as Tintoretto, who, like him, made wax models for the figures he was going to paint. Every limb and feature of this vast throng of martyrs and executioners and devotees is a masterpiece of delicate articulation. But their naked feet are scarcely treading on the ground which they pattern; they seem to be the spirits rather than the physical supports of their bodies.

Such spirituality, however, failed to please the King. Perhaps what he wanted even from religious pictures was not pure religion. His secretary wrote: "The picture does not please His Majesty, and that is no wonder, for it pleases few, although they say that there is much art in it and its author understands much, and there are excellent things of his to be seen."

So El Greco remained for life at Toledo. In his day the middle class was deserting the city, and grass was growing in the streets. But it was still the centre of Spanish culture. The author of *Don Quixote* was El Greco's fellow-citizen. It was still ten times the size of Madrid, still the source of the finest woven silks and the best-painted tiles in Spain and of the most famous blades in Europe. Above all, it was the centre of the greatest of all Spanish industries, the Church. It is still the ecclesiastic capital of Spain. It was then the citadel of the Jesuits, the centre of the new religion of ecstasy; as such, the spiritual rival of Rome.

It was after several years in Rome, which was full of Spaniards, that El Greco had come there. He may have had promises of commissions before he came, have known something of the city's character and recognised in it his spiritual home, the place where he could develop the emotional quality which had been in his art from the first. In his *Healing of the Man Born Blind*, at Parma, he had distorted the measured classical perspective of the Renaissance to induce the mood for a miracle, and had expressed the new religion in the dancing transports of an old man who seems to defend himself from the shock of his new belief.

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† Colour Plate 3, Plates 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15

Several of El Greco's earliest pictures seem to have been connected with the district of Parma. Crete, where he was born, as Domenikos Theotokopoulos, in 1541, was a part of the Venetian Empire; and one would surmise that he had begun his career in Venice, which was also the great centre of painting, even if he had not been described by another painter during his time in Italy as the pupil of Titian. Titian, however, was an old man by then, and his late work is not what a young man could profitably imitate or even fully understand. El Greco is only the first of many subsequent painters to go through something of the same development as Titian and to derive most profit from him towards the end.

It was at Parma that Correggio had lived and painted, and, though El Greco's technique was Titian's from the first, Correggio was a strong influence on his compositions, with the sweet affectations and the daring perspective of his flying angels, with the brilliance of his artificial light and shade. In *The Adoration of the Shepherds* in S. Domingo el Antiguo at Toledo, one of El Greco's earliest commissions there, the dramatic idea of the light radiating from the newborn Child and casting dark shadows around comes from Correggio's famous *Notte*. The very first commission, for the six large canvases which once composed a huge altar-piece for S. Domingo, demanded a scale which he is not known to have used before. He rose to this fully, and put into these pictures an astonishing learning and command of form acquired in Italy: something of Veronese's colour, something of Michelangelo's drawing. This was an eclectic age, and Tintoretto's maxim "the drawing of Michelangelo, the colour of Titian" might equally well have been written over El Greco's studio door.

By its simplicity the *Christ on the Cross* † in the Louvre serves as a good example of his art at this time. The body of Christ is still essentially as Donatello had conceived it—a figure compounded of detached observation, constructive science and creative idealism in the rational proportions prescribed by the Italians of the Renaissance. What is distinctive is the way it is lit. The shadows down one side exaggerate its really normal slenderness, and the light, flaming suddenly here and there, as in that vivid patch on the shadowed right thigh, gives to the whole body something of its flickering quality. Above all, the light relates it intimately and logically to the pattern of the sky behind. It is this sky which is most original. The colour of its silver-edged, inky clouds, and even their shape, may derive from Veronese; but no one had ever before imparted so Apocalyptic an impression of tragedy by the painting of mere clouds.

Christ on the Cross is by no means one of the earliest pictures from Toledo, for all its rounded suavity of form, which in *The Adoration* had already given place to jagged rhythms and angular shapes—which are somewhat papery in character. The task of adapting the rich Venetian technique to the expression of an ecstatic asceticism was no easy one, and during the first decade or so the results are variable.

In the great *Espolio* of the Cathedral the substantial form and juicy painting are not incompatible with spiritual feeling. In the faces of the three Marys, who watch with fascinated horror the hole which the joiner is boring in the Cross, there is an ethereal tenderness; the triumph of Christ's sublimity over the nightmare of sordid passions personified in his executioners is convincing. In other pictures of a few years later, where

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† Plate 10

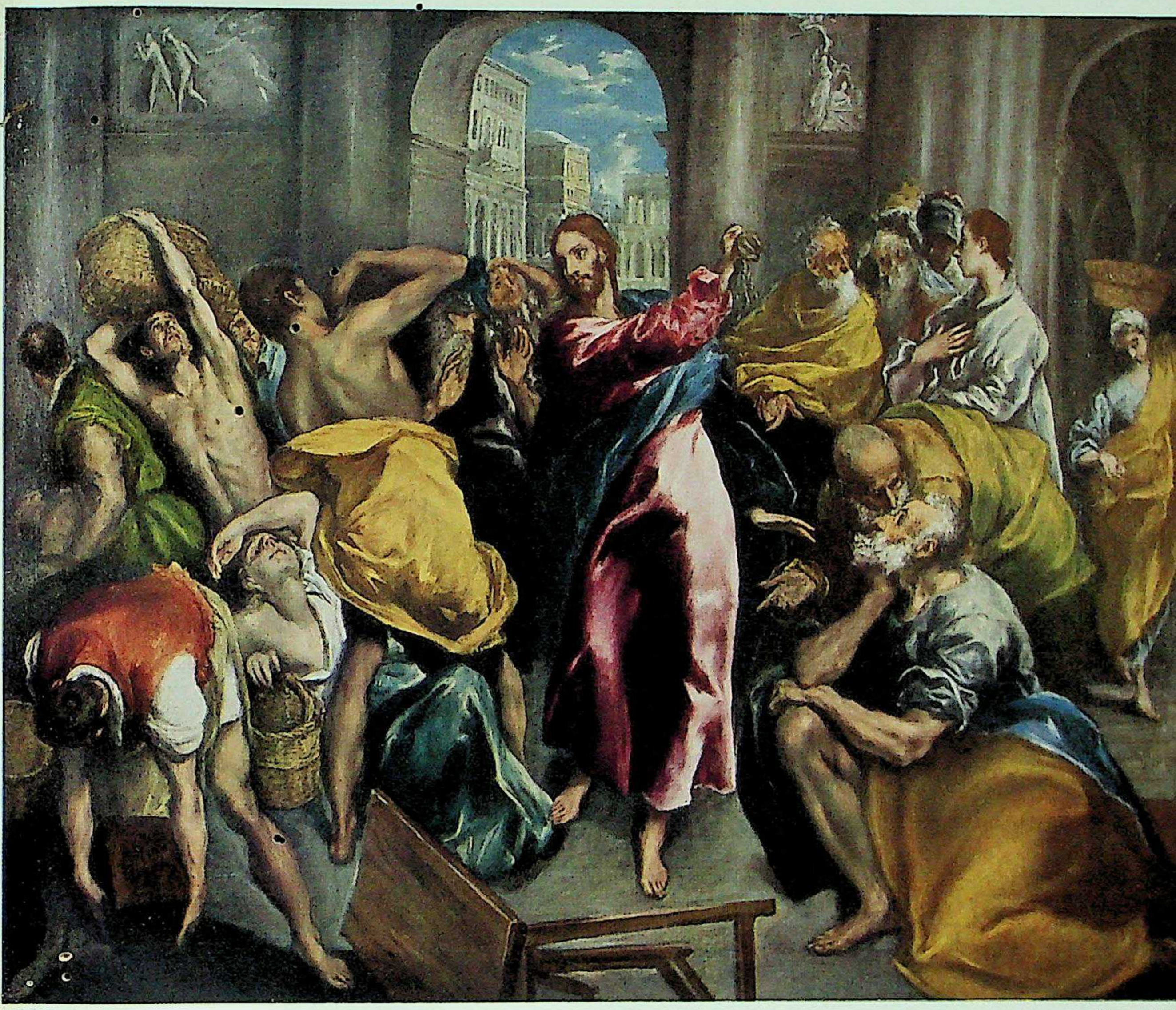

Plate 3

National G

CHRIST DRIVING THE TRADERS FROM THE TEMPLE *by EL GRECO* (1541-1614)

Original 41¾" × 51"

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the form is less solid, the sincerity is less certain. The fairy feet and airy gestures in *The Martyrdom of St. Maurice* have more of exhibitionism than of heroism or of tragedy. The hands and faces of the pomaded dandies who throng *The Burial of Count Orgaz* † are exquisite to the point of sickliness, none the less so for the still richly Venetian painting of the vestments of the two Saints who have appeared miraculously to take the interment of the chivalrous Count into their own hands.

There was a dispute with the parish council of Santo Tomé over the payment for this picture, and the painter insisted on adding to the receipt for the sum which he finally accepted: "As surely as the rate of payment is below the value of my sublime work, so surely will my name go down to posterity . . . as one of the greatest geniuses of Spanish painting." At that time it was no very immodest claim to make. El Greco was in a fine worldly position at Toledo. The year before, in 1585, he and his Jerónima had moved into the spacious house which had been the palace of a marquis and is the El Greco Museum to-day. But he was in the dangerous professional position of having no artist of his own calibre against whom he could measure himself.

Sincerity of expression, however, is closely bound up with earnestness in the endeavour to solve the problems of art; and El Greco was an artist of great intellectual power. Pacheco, the future father-in-law of Velázquez and one of the earlier historians of Spanish painting, who visited him when he was seventy, described him as a great philosopher and a great wit, and a writer about painting, sculpture and architecture. He was a wide reader, too. His library, according to the inventory made after his death, comprised seventy-two books in Greek, Latin, Italian and Spanish. Painters are not often great readers, and books were rare things in those days.

The real proof of El Greco's learning and of his keen intelligence is in his pictures. *The Resurrection*,† in the Prado, might be taken as the perfect example of Baroque painting; for it combines a complete realisation of the age's principles of composition with a vehemence of emotional expression which is not usually to be found in academic painting. There are no irrelevancies from Nature. Those delightful evidences of her bounty which the painters of the Renaissance before Michelangelo, and the Venetians after him, had incorporated with the sunshine that they painted, disappeared in the artificial lighting of the eclectic painters. There is even no more earth here than is barely essential for the soldiers to stand on. These, again, are clad in tight tunics which leave them almost naked, lest their costume or their weapons should have any intrinsic interest. The long bodies, the swords and spears and armour, are distributed with such skill that they represent unity in their confusion, and all together form a single movement which carries the mind upward with the soaring body of Christ. It is a unity not only in the large outline of the design, but of its different elements. Form and colour and light have become the same thing; so that outline has in fact almost disappeared. And the unity is not only intellectual, but emotional. The spirit of the Resurrection is in the whole movement, in the half-ethereal quality of the forms, in the mystical quality of the colours. Christ's banner is white, and it is a white light which pours down over him from above to send the bluish half-tones down his side and throw a sharp dark shadow under the soldier who has been thrown to the ground. The tunic of this man in the centre is of lemon-yellow, that of the soldier who lies the other way beside him is of emerald-green, that of the man on the extreme left is of wine purple. The centurion and two other soldiers are in ethereal blue, and the great cloud against which Christ rises is of blue, until it encounters the radiance at the top.

It is suggested that *The Resurrection* was once part with five other great canvases of a vast altar-piece formerly in the College of Our Lady of Aragon in Madrid. The College was consecrated in 1590, and this might well be the approximate date of *The Resurrection*. The other canvases would seem to have been painted some years later; but they all six have in common a curious border, two or three inches wide, painted down each side of the canvas in loose patches of contrasting colour, mostly black and white and pink. In the comparative darkness of the College chapel this would be scarcely visible; but it would give the compositions a vibrant edge, sufficient to release their dreamlike visions from the constraint of the frames. Previously, every painter had taken the frame into consideration in forming his design, using its two dimensions as the basis upon which the illusion of the third dimension is constructed in the picture. To El Greco the third dimension is the earth, the materialism from which he is urging mankind to escape. He has never painted the horizon, has gradually reduced the depth of his illusion to the minimum; and now he attempts to detach the illusion even from the frame. His later compositions flicker like flames up and down, rather than across or into depth. In *The Baptism*, also now in the Prado, and its companion *Nativity*, presumably still belonging to the King of Roumania, the canvases are immensely tall and narrow, so that the frame has scarcely more than one dimension. The figures themselves are fantastically tall and narrow, but not with the mere decorative affectation which so many Mannerist painters have given them at the expense of their vitality. They are full of energy, and their equally exaggerated swellings here and there contribute to the general speed of movement, to the dominant excited mood of ecstasy.

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† Plate 12

† Plate 13

The Crucifixion,† in the Prado, is another picture probably of this series; and the character and extent of El Greco's development can be well seen by a glance back to the Louvre *Christ on the Cross* ‡ of some twenty years before. The proportions of the new Crucified are scarcely less normal than those of the earlier figure. But the beauty is no longer the sensuous beauty of an individual body. The body is part of the vivid expression of the whole scene. In the earlier picture it was the sky, a separate piece of Nature, which expressed the agony of the figure to which it formed a background. Here the sky ceases to be even a background. It is only the source of the light which envelops all the forms, governing both their individual quality and their relation one to another. The design of the picture is less suave, less decorative, less obvious. The jagged, diamond-shaped pattern in which these figures are disposed is in harmony with the jagged quality of the figures themselves. The unity of the whole composition is a deeper and more complex unity, attained, like the unity of *The Resurrection*, not so much by continuity of outline as by the close and logical knitting together of the planes. This is the method of one who is essentially a colourist, a painter rather than a draughtsman.

When an elder pupil of Titian, Tintoretto, was asked which were the most beautiful colours, he replied, "Black and white," for they could give most relief to forms. Tintoretto was a worshipper of Michelangelo. When Pacheco asked El Greco whether colouring or drawing was more difficult, he replied, "Colouring," and proceeded to castigate Michelangelo as a painter. He might have gone on, perhaps, to explain that colour is the same thing as light, and that form exists only to be dissolved in it.

Every painter begins inevitably with the problem of constructing form, and beauty of shape thus becomes his first medium of expression. The problems of lighting and colouring his shapes are at first almost separate problems; but as he searches for unity, the elements are gradually seen to be one and the same thing, until the synthesis of form and light and colour is complete. Most of the

† Plate 11

‡ Plate 10

great painters of the Renaissance had gone through something of this development; but it was with Giovanni Bellini, in the invention of the Venetian way of painting, that the development had first attained completeness. Titian had gone through the same stages more quickly, and had carried the last stage considerably farther. El Greco, with the example of Titian's late work frequently before him in Madrid, with his Greek intelligence, quicker and more logical but less deep than the Venetian's, with his wish to soar into a heaven of light and colour and emotion, reaches the last stage most quickly and painlessly of all. As he draws together in one all the elements of composition, he simplifies the method of painting. In his hands oil painting has become a swifter, more direct and fresher process than ever before.

His latest pictures are nothing if they are not painting. In *The Assumption of the Virgin* † in the Museo S. Vicente at Toledo, for instance, what outlines there are are not beautiful in themselves, but abrupt to the point of distortion. The beauty is in the great sweeps of colour, which are the form and the light and the shade. To get a dramatic unity which had never before been attained in this scene, El Greco has greatly simplified its traditional presentation. The Apostles who usually gesticulate below are gone, and with them the tomb itself. There are only the lilies and roses which grew out of the tomb when it was opened. They are an emblem of sweetness and hope against that distant, dark hillside, of which only a broad contour here and there and the sharper shapes of some mysterious buildings are revealed in the light of the moon. They begin the process by which the eye is led with the movement of the forms upward and across the immensity of the storm-ridden sky, and upward again to where the design opens out into the dome of ethereal forms at the top, where the sweeps of colour become wilder and more broken as they gather speed, and where a blaze of light descends upon the wings of the Dove.

This is one of the last pictures which El Greco painted before he died in his house at Toledo, at the age of seventy-three, in 1614. He was then the only great painter who was at work in the South of Europe; and he had made a great art out of the very elements which would seem to have killed its spirit: Spain and the Counter-Reformation.

CHAPTER IV

El Greco was one of the first of the *tenebrosi*: of those who painted with darkness rather than with light. He is not generally included in their ranks; for the word is Italian, and refers traditionally to Caravaggio and those who worked under his influence in Italy. Besides, he is too great a man and too much of a colourist to be enrolled in so limited a sect. Nevertheless, he was the first painter in history to eschew consistently in his pictures the light of day.

There had, of course, been night-scenes ever since the study of light had been undertaken by the Italian and Flemish painters of the 15th century; but they had been exceptions. Light is the key to all painting, and from the beauty of the Italian sky comes much of the beauty of Italian art in the 15th and 16th centuries: its joyous clarity of form and colour, the very confidence of artists that a brilliant mirror to Nature is the finest vehicle for the expression of human joy and sorrow. Towards the end of the Renaissance, as the less joyful spirit and the more academic conceptions of the Baroque began to enclose art in a narrower mould, the painted sky began to darken. Tintoretto would shut himself in his studio at night and compose his dramas in a miniature theatre by making his wax manikins throw sharp shadows in the candlelight. It was, no doubt, from him that El Greco learned this practice; but El Greco was the first to turn his back completely upon the sun. After he came to Spain, he painted either the moonlight or some magic effect of brilliance, as in his *Adoration*, where the radiance of the Child outshines both the hermit's candle and the moon behind. Even his *View of Toledo* † is seen by a flash of lightning in the inky night.

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† Plate 14

His *Boy Blowing on a Coal*, in Naples, is one of the first of those naturalistic studies of artificial light which were to fascinate so many painters and their patrons all over Europe for more than a century. His more complex pictures, representing a popular Spanish proverb, which grew out of it, are the first Spanish *genre* pictures, the prototypes of those scenes of humble life which became known as *bodegones*, from the lowly taverns which usually supplied the scene. They are the exceptions to El Greco's idealism; but they are the earliest examples of the naturalism which was natural to Spain.

The gloomy note in painting was but the expression of the spiritual gloom of the Counter-Reformation, settling over Italy as Spain laid her repressive hand upon her. It was natural enough that it should find its complete expression in Spain. The earliest of the native *tenebrosi* was Francisco Ribalta (1551 or 1555–1628) of Valencia. He worked in Madrid as a young man and knew El Greco's work in the Escorial, though he may have got his bits of inspiration from Raphael and Sebastiano del Piombo and the Carracci in Italy itself. These he put together in a Mannerist style, for which a place could hardly be claimed for him in the great tradition; but it suggests that he was one of the links with Italy in the development of the dark school of Spanish painting.

Ribalta saw darkly, through Loyola's eyes. Darkness was itself almost a part of the Jesuit religion, which made use of painting as a means of propaganda. In a picture it held the worshipper in isolation, shut off from the world beyond the image before him, and so induced the mood for contemplation of torture and martyrdom. Though he was the one great painter of Spanish religion, El Greco had got into trouble more than once for not painting the New Testament story exactly as it was related—for using his imagination. The Jesuits instituted and maintained a rigid censorship of art, through special officers whom they appointed to inspect it. The female nude was strictly forbidden, and with it, to all intents and purposes, the allegory and the mythology which were the most fruitful sources of inspiration to the Italians of the later Renaissance. So the Spanish painters, who were not given to the kind of abstraction which had enabled the Italians to make of the Madonna a theme of universal significance, were bound to these scenes of gloomy religious narrative. The *bodegones* were their only alternative.

Jusepe Ribera † (1589–1652) was born at Valencia, and must have been Ribalta's pupil there; but he was in Italy by the time he was twenty-five, and there is no proof that he ever returned to Spain. He became a member of the Roman Academy, where he exhibited alongside Annibale Carracci and Nicolas Poussin; so that he was free to paint the Italian *poesie*. But a *Flaying of Marsyas* by him is only more unpleasant in subject and less well painted than a *Martyrdom of St. Bartholomew*. He lived and worked in Naples, which belonged to Spain, and where the chief influence was that of Caravaggio, the leader of the *tenebrosi*. Caravaggio was dead before Ribera reached Naples, but his influence was rife in Italy and spreading over

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† Plate 15

† Plate 16

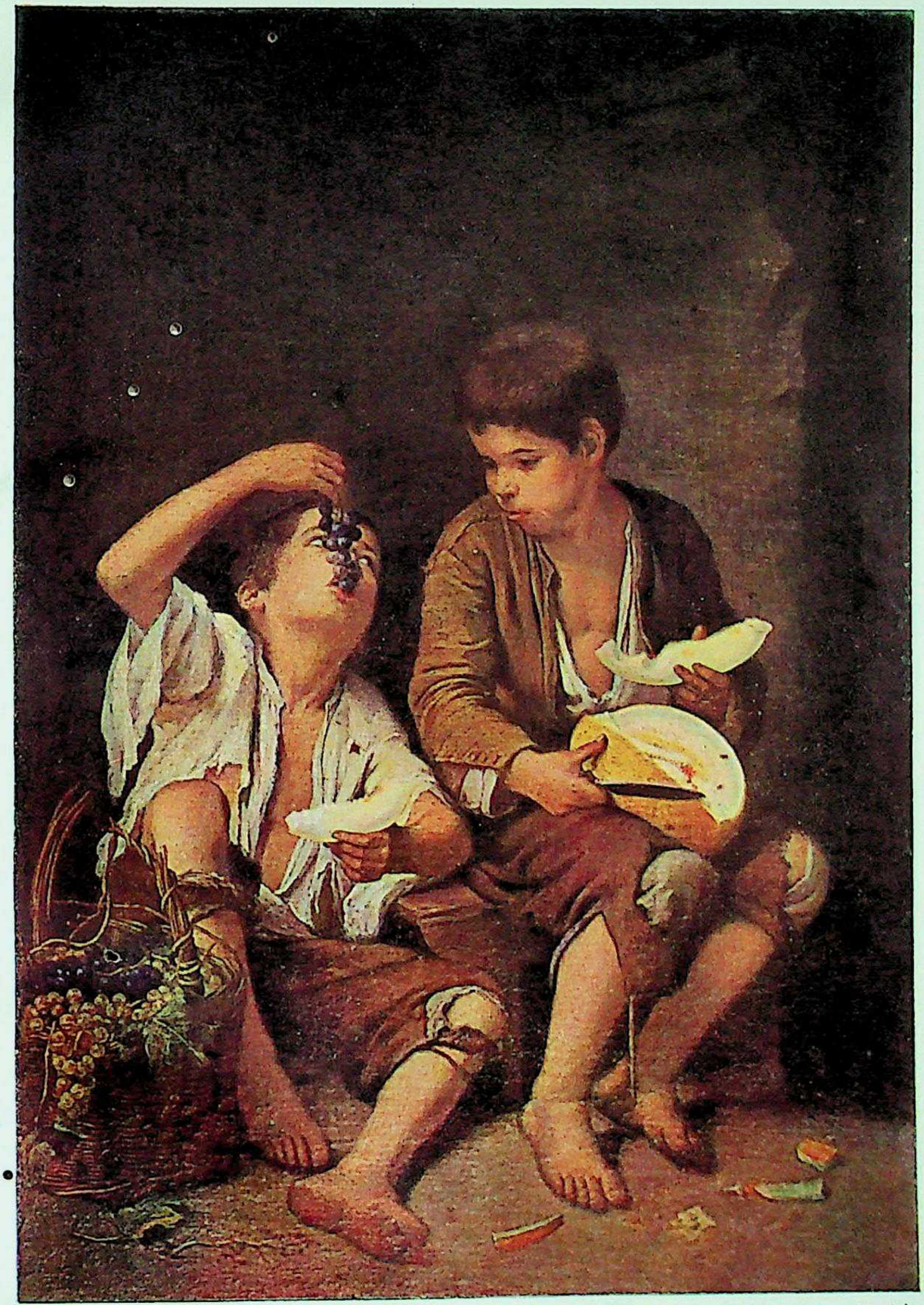

Plate 4 *Munich*

THE MELON EATERS *By MURILLO* (1618-1682)

Original 56¾″ × 39¾″

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Europe. It affected far greater men—Rubens, Rembrandt, Vermeer—for his means of projecting his figures out of deep shadow had brought to its highest pitch the power of stereoscopic illusionism. He himself, however, used it to no much greater purpose than to tease or shock. He led a vulgar reaction against the poetic idealism of the Renaissance; and since that idealism had led the Italian artists finally to paganism, the Church of the Counter-Reformation welcomed Caravaggio, at first. His violent behaviour, however, had made even Naples too hot for him.

Ribera seems to have inherited the tradition of violence. He had a reputation for persecuting his rivals, and is said to have driven the mild Domenichino to his death. In his *Martyrdom of St. Bartholomew*,† in the Prado, dated either 1630 or 1639, there is little suggestion of the triumph of the spirit. His worn-out martyr represents only the toughness of the peasant body. His roughness, however, seems to be the genuine roughness of one who comes of peasant stock. He was innocent of the sophistication which underlay Caravaggio's revolt, and if his pictures are less clever than the Italian's, they are also less academic. He was no great composer. The lax and unimaginative design of many of his larger pictures is innocent of decorative sense. They are redeemed here and there, however, by passages of extraordinary realism; and when he paints a single Saint or Martyr, on whom he can focus a single beam of light, and so gain a concentration not to be got by his undistinguished sense of form, there is a genuine intensity of observation, a solid union of the grim, unpolished vision of humanity with the unaffected, leathery technique. His colouring was of the simplest, his shadows always brown. His painting is the very essence of the "brown school" against which modern colourists have revolted. But he emerged gradually from the artificial darkness of his hero into an increasing luminosity, and even into a less ghastly view of life.

He would have been a happier and a greater painter had he become acquainted earlier with peasant subjects such as Velázquez and Murillo painted in their youth—if, too, there had been sufficient demand for these in Naples. His *Boy with a Club-foot*, in the Louvre, dated the very year of his death, has both the disreputable gaiety of Naples and the uncompromising realism of Spanish painting at its best and rarest moments. It is the peasant counterpart of Velázquez' cool and courtly portraits, with its broad colour-plan and its impression of hot, outdoor light.

If *The Boy with a Club-foot* was painted afterwards, in a reflex of Sevillian influence, it was the naturalism of Caravaggio and Ribera which first brought life to the painting of Seville. Through the colonisation of the Americas the Sevillians had been making immense fortunes, and, as Toledo fell into decline, their city had become the centre of Spanish culture. One of the meeting-places there for the learned and the artistic of the South was the house of the painter Pacheco (1564–1654). He was a good Latin scholar, and he had a literary turn which made him the first biographer of Velázquez; Velázquez was his pupil, and became his son-in-law. At the wedding one of the party in the sacristy was the famous poet, Francisco de Rioja. Pacheco's painting, however, is scarcely distinguished. It is but the usual clumsy mannerisation after the style of the late Italian Renaissance. It was only the younger generation who were able to free themselves of exotic influences and, inspired by the greater strength and sincerity of Ribera, to develop a vision of their own.

Francisco Zurbarán † (1598–*c.* 1664), who was a year older than Velázquez, was not, like him, a native of Seville. He was born in Estremadura; but at the age of fifteen he became the pupil of an obscure Sevillian artist. He may well have graduated before long to the studio of Pacheco, for in their early years he seems to have used the very models that Velázquez used. In latter days, too, in 1658, he stated on oath that he had known the Court painter forty years. By then he, too, had settled in Madrid; but almost the whole of his working life was spent in Seville. He was appointed painter to the Corporation in 1629. He had none of the precocity or the brilliance of the colleague of his youth. His was a less dexterous hand, a less searching eye, a less aristocratic mind. It is not surprising, therefore, that the influence of Velázquez appears at intervals in his life's work, or that, after helping him at first, it led him finally to tread on lawns where he looks rather awkward and unfinished, with his sturdy, peasant gait.

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† Plate 16

† Plates 17 and 18

To his work at Seville, however—which quickly spread to the other great towns of Andalusia—and particularly to that of his early maturity, his native strength and simplicity give a character which is unique. He is one of the few painters who is both provincial and great, at least sometimes, by world standards. Alone of all the native Spanish painters he gave a noble human meaning to the scenes from the lives of the Saints and Martyrs, of which he painted many a large series. These compositions have the heaviness of their type; but the weight of their forms is the live weight of real strength, the depth of their shadows represents real profundity of mind, the positive, sonorous colouring comes of passionate feeling. Mere good taste is rarely met in Spanish painting. These pieces of real life, however, are put together on but a rough scaffold of idealism; so that Zurbarán is at his greatest in the simpler pictures which required but a single figure. There is a large number of full-length figures by him in various degrees of idealisation: direct, straightforward portraits of members of the religious fraternities, ladies in disguise as Virgin Martyrs—the *St. Margaret*† of the National Gallery is a charming example—the heroic, symbolic series of twelve Patriarchs, in the Castle at Bishop Auckland (one is an old copy; the attribution of the rest is often disputed). In these he showed himself as sincere a portraitist as any, perhaps the most chivalrous and magnanimous of all Spanish painters.

Bartolomé Esteban Murillo† (1618–82) was born at Seville long after Velázquez had settled in Madrid and after Zurbarán had passed his prime. He was of a younger generation; but his earliest work is based on the early *bodegones* of Velázquez, on the naturalism of Ribera and Zurbarán. His *Charity of S. Diego of Alcalá* of 1645 in the Madrid Academy is composed uncouthly; but it is inspired by a touching peasant piety, and painted, like some early work of Manet, in a painterly way of corresponding simplicity. In the famous *Melon Eaters* of some five years later, at Munich, or the little *Peasant Boy* of the National Gallery, the straightforward subject has inspired him to paint in a deft and varied way, with broad colour, dramatic lighting and concentrated design. With these he would have made a place for himself in the tradition of Spanish realism at its very best, if he had not used them to express a sentimentality which betrays too great a desire to please. In the great altar-pieces which became his life-work his sugary rendering of religion became the counterpart, scarcely more fortunate, of the dark cruelty of earlier generations.

Zurbarán and Murillo must both have visited Madrid, and have seen in the royal palace there the great series of canvases from Titian's old age in which form and light and colour have come to be a single element, the smoke of a passion which was still smouldering under its own banked ashes. This famous *sfumato*, which was such a powerful intoxicant when it came from the brush of the dexterous old Venetian, was to prove in the hands of these less experienced provincials only a solvent which robbed form and colour and light of their strength and frankness, and gave no compensating intensity of atmosphere. In

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† Plate 17

† Colour Plate 4, Plates 27 and 28

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Zurbarán's *Scenes from the Life of St. Jerome*, at Guadalupe, it gives fire and passion certainly, but not in proportion to the strength and simplicity of form that are gone.

In Murillo's *Holy Family* of the National Gallery it is used only as a vehicle of vapid sentiment, an excuse for loose design. From Seville, however, where Murillo spent the whole of his life, becoming the founder and first President of its Academy, these sugary vaguenesses gradually conquered the world, bringing to him a posthumous reputation as the greatest of the Spanish painters. Gainsborough was the owner of his *St. John Baptist*, in the National Gallery, and in the *St. John with the Lamb* there one can see more clearly still the inspiration of the mawkish side of 18th-century English painting. Until the middle of the 19th century the great collectors of France and England wrangled for Murillo's work. It is only since the middle of that century that Velázquez and Goya have come to occupy his former place.

CHAPTER V

Before he joined Pacheco's studio, Velázquez † had been for a time the pupil of another Sevillian painter: Francisco Herrera the Elder (*c.* 1576–1656). Born in 1599, Velázquez was only thirteen when he thus began his career. His free choice at that early age shows self-knowledge even more precocious than Rembrandt's, for there was no painter in his respectable ancestry, either in his father's family, the de Silva, or in his mother's, the Velázquez, whose name he was to make so famous. Few great painters who lived more than sixty years have left so little work; but his deliberation must have been impressive from the first, for at nineteen the distinguished Pacheco allowed him to marry his daughter Juana.

From the first there must have been a courtly ambition pointing the way to Madrid. It was this which led Velázquez to the exchange of masters. Pacheco could introduce him to men of refinement and tell him of the great pictures which he had seen in Madrid and at the Escorial; but it was out of the scenes from low life of the Sevillian painters—the *bodegones*—that he made the greatest of his early works. The figures of Saints which he painted at Seville are not much more than portrait studies, for he had little religious feeling and no more capacity to invent ideal form. The supreme qualities of his mind were faith in the significance of what he actually saw and the logic by which he eventually created from it a perfectly visual harmony.

In his *bodegones*, from the very first, the separate objects possess an extraordinary illusionism. The surfaces, each glowing with its own individual quality, are more than real. This is accomplished certainly by a wonderful technical facility; but that in its turn can be the result only of a still more wonderful intensity of observation, a uniquely detached interest in the object. The painted surfaces, which seem more tangible, somehow, than the originals, end in contours of absolute decision, related to one another in such a way as to make everything inevitable, as if it could not possibly have been otherwise.

At first the objects are bound in compositions which are complex and wandering; but *The Water-carrier of Seville*, which probably comes at the end of the Sevillian period, is composed with great concentration. Such completeness and inevitability of impression are got only by an iron-willed co-ordination of mind and eye and hand. Those who can see in Velázquez' vision only the ambition of the photographer must imagine that they can be got merely by a juggling with faint images.

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† Frontispiece, Plates 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26

It is Ingres rather who anticipates the daguerreotype, with his remoteness from the real qualities of the objects which he represents. Velázquez' closeness to them makes him from the very first essentially a painter—more so, perhaps, than any other artist—while through them, however rough and simple they may be, the cool distinction of his mind imparts a detachment which is beautiful in itself and anything but commonplace.

A first attempt upon the Court of Madrid in 1622 was unsuccessful, in spite of Pacheco's letters of introduction and the Sevillian sympathies of the great Olivares, who managed the new boy-king, Philip IV. A second in the following year brought success; and Velázquez was soon painting an equestrian portrait of the King and another of the young Prince Charles from England, which was interrupted by the latter's abrupt recall.

The earliest portrait of the King to survive is the standing full-length of 1624, in the Metropolitan Museum in New York. The plain black silhouette against the plain grey background seems equally realistic and original whether we compare it with the stiff, flat, decorated, Court-portraits which had become traditional at the Spanish Court since Coello or with the fluttering draperies and gesticulation of portraiture in the Grand Manner elsewhere. The more courtly Velázquez wished to be, the more he simplified. In the portrait of a few years later, in the Prado Museum, the same simple arrangement becomes simpler still, while there is a new, idealistic refinement. The features are purged of all but the purest of outline, curving with a royal power and grace.

He was now to paint Classical subjects according to the Renaissance tradition, which existed in Spain almost only in the Italian pictures of the royal palaces. But the *Bacchus*, for which he was paid in 1629, has come down to us under the title of *Los Borrachos* (*The Topers*)†; reasonably enough, for it is the last and greatest of his *bodegones*. Even Bacchus is a boy of the fields, idealised only by being made more vivid than reality in the brightness of his flesh under the strong sun. The devotees whom he is crowning are a rabble of peasants, grinning self-consciously at their part in an unaccustomed rite. The figures have all been studied in the studio, each in a concentrated sidelight; but the sum of them all is an effect of new intensity, an impression of incredible vitality. One feels the heat of their blood under the pressure of the hot sun and of the heady wine. This is the very essence of the immemorial Spanish people and their countryside, parched brown under the sullen blue of the sky. The paint itself is thick and leathery; but Velázquez' power to paint illusions has acquired a still greater versatility. There is a yet further degree of tangibility in the porcelain bowl and the wine which it contains, in the filled glass upheld by the satyr, or the empty glass upon the ground, in the steel and the leather, the felt and the cloth, the tanned skins and matted hair and the brilliant eyes which dominate the scene.

Before he painted *Los Borrachos*, or while he was painting it, Velázquez received a new impetus from his greatest contemporary. In 1628–29 Rubens, on a second visit to the Spanish Court, spent more than seven months mostly in the company of the young Court-painter. The other Court-painters were unaccomplished, lazy and ignorant; but now Velázquez had to measure himself against a man at the height of his fame, who in this short space of time conducted the important political negotiations for which he had come from the Spanish Viceregal Court of the Netherlands, went with distinguished grace through all the elaborate Court ceremonies, which to many were an occupation in themselves, painted at least two great subject-pictures and innumerable portraits of the royal family (of Olivares and of private people), and still had not only the time but the humility to make innumerable full-size copies after the innumerable pictures by Titian in the royal collections. He took away with him an endless list of commissions for decorations to the new royal palaces of the Buen Retiro and the Torre de la Parada, so that, from now until his death in 1640, great canvases from the last and finest phase of Rubens' career kept arriving in batches. It was Velázquez who had to see that they were unpacked and hung.

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† Plate 23

Meanwhile, soon after Rubens had returned to his home, Velázquez paid his first visit to Italy. What esteem he had already won for himself at Court is shown by the distinguished treatment that the King's recommendation secured for him as he travelled slowly through the peninsula, from Genoa to Venice, and from Venice through Rome to Naples, making long sojourns which kept him abroad eighteen months. The big pictures that he painted there, probably the National Gallery's *Christ at the Column* and certainly *Vulcan's Forge* in the Prado, and *Joseph's Coat* at the Escorial, show a certain dislocation of his powers as he tried to use conflicting ideas which were exotic to him in a kind of ideal composition for which he had no genius. Settled at Court again, he soon restored, by his power to analyse and to assimilate what he needed, the perfect integrity of his vision. Its realism became the more comprehensive for his experiences, and in the next five or six years he painted under the new stimulus a larger number of pictures than at any other period.

Inevitably it was Venetian colour that he absorbed into his vision, for the outline of a Michelangelo or Raphael is an idealist symbol that leads away from the perfect realism which he was intent on accomplishing. This he had always known. His outlines had been simple and true. His colours, too, had been simple, but not pure. Under the influence of Caravaggio there had been a good deal of black shadow, and light had tended to predominate by a forced brilliance. Now, under the influence of the Venetians, he came to realise that colour could be the same thing as light, that together they could represent form, that outline was an arbitrary statement, interfering with the unity of the total impression.

One sees the full force of his idea for the first time in the National Gallery's *Philip IV in Brown and Silver*.† In the modelling of the head there are still definite outlines and sharp shadows; but what makes the weak face so impressive is the dazzling brilliance of the colour. The figure throws a dark shadow on the floor; but this shadow is no part of the modelling in the ordinary sense; it is there rather to emphasise the white silhouette of the legs, which is even more striking than the black silhouette of the feet upon the light grey. Philip's legs are poor legs, and their poverty of shape is mercilessly exposed. Yet they have the power of a royal command, to be accepted without criticism. They must be the legs of a king, for outline and colour are so exact and so unhesitating. 'Values' have never before had such subtlety and precision, at the same time giving all the fine texture of the silk stockings and distinguishing the substances of the flesh and bone beneath. This descriptive power in the colour creates the whole picture. It is conceived in colour. But no part of the colour is either emotional or decorative in the first place; it is working for the whole effect—an effect of absolute realism. To a Venetian or a Fleming, used to expect the decorative or the emotional in every picture, this must have seemed an outrageous piece of nonchalance. But the realism is one with an iron subordination of every part to the completeness of the whole, and this is one with a perfection of taste which makes restraint seem more royal than splendour. The elaborate silver embroidery on the brown suit is allowed to reveal none of its intrinsic beauty. A Coello would have described it in slavish detail. A Titian or a Rubens would have made of it a subsidiary rhythm of line and colour. Velázquez only flicks upon the canvas its confused sparkle of light, a part of the cool and silvery truth which is the whole impression.

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† Plate 19

The new significance that he had thus given to colour soon allowed Velázquez to use it with far greater freedom and intensity. In *Don Balthasar Carlos on Horseback*, † in the Prado, there is even a bold triangle of pink on the ground beneath the tail of the bay pony. The varying colour of the stout little animal stands out strongly against the greenish-blue of the distance, and the run of browns and coppers and golds and greys in its head and body, in the boot-leather and in the gilt of trappings and embroidery, makes an elaborate and lively harmony with the gay colours of the little Prince's dress: the deep blue of his coat and brighter blue of the saddle and pommel, the rose of his scarf, with its lilac shadows. Velázquez has learned to use only pure colours and to intensify them in the shadow, instead of dulling them with grey and brown. Contrasts of colour have taken the place of contrasts between light and shade. Transparent glazes and airy scumbles have taken the place of the thick paint of former days.

There is an almost scandalous brilliance in the portrait of the King, in the Frick Museum in New York, which was painted at Fraga in 1644, when Velázquez accompanied him on a tour of Aragon. The King is in pink. One is dazzled at first by the light as it falls on the brilliant figure and plays over the silver ornament of the dress and the satin of the sleeves and the silver sword-hilt. The handling is so vivacious that it looks at first like mere virtuosity. But the impression is one of extraordinary reality, because the light is the colour, and every stroke has a function —that of defining the exact quality of the object and its accurate distance from the eye.

The King's face looks bored and prematurely worn. His painter might well have felt the same, for this has been his constant model now for twenty years. It was a model who had been trained from infancy not to move a muscle of the face in public. To show feeling was against the dignity of a king whose queen could be touched, even to save her life, only under the penalty of death. Rubens had reported Philip to be a man of intelligence and good taste. Enmeshed in the daily routine of the most rigid etiquette in Europe, his diversions of feasting and hunting wrapped in elaborate ceremony, the King must have been intensely bored. Surrounded by aristocrats who had inherited their offices about the Court, he must have got a quite nefarious pleasure from his intimacy with a man so bourgeois as Velázquez. The painter had a studio in the old palace of the Alcazar, and there Philip found on occasion sweet relief in conversation and in watching him paint. It is one of the paradoxes of history that out of the very centre of this circle of atrophied humanity should come a new and fresh vision which would eventually convert the liveliest nation in Europe. Perhaps the very lack of ordinary emotions which Velázquez must have suffered at Court assisted him to arrive at his utter detachment.

Perhaps the finest proof of this detachment is the series of portraits of the Court dwarfs, who become on canvas beings of a significance which they can never have had for others in the flesh. They become dignified by the same absolute truthfulness of presentation which gives such an air of royalty to the King. Velázquez looks neither up nor down. He shows neither flattery nor compassion, and the result is a dignity shared by the very dogs which are so often included in his portraits. He is the greatest of all painters of animals.

There is only the faintest trace of intimacy in the lovely portrait, known as *The Lady with a Fan*, † which may represent his elder daughter Francisca, in the Wallace Collection. Francisca had married her father's assistant and imitator, Mazo (*c.* 1612 (?)–1667), who was to step into his shoes at Court after he was gone.

Other young painters besides Mazo adopted

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† Plate 20

† Frontispiece

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the new method of painting. With a flourishing school at Seville, there was more interest in art than at any other time in Spain, and the project was revived of a Spanish Academy. New painters from abroad were needed for the decoration of the new royal palaces. Rubens was dead, and they were not yet filled with pictures from floor to ceiling. So in 1649 Velázquez paid a second visit to Italy, on a mission less personal than the first. None of the schemes came to very much; but this second visit, which lasted more than two years, to the frantic anxiety of Philip, was the stimulus to the final phase of Velázquez' art.

As before, he stayed mostly in Venice, Rome and Naples. In Rome he painted the portrait of his mulatto assistant, Juan de Pareja, in Longford Castle, the terrific *Pope Innocent X* of the Doria Gallery, and the two little scenes from the gardens of the Villa Medici,† in the Prado. These are unique among the landscapes of their century or the next, initiating ideas which were developed no farther until the 19th century. The architecture in the view reproduced is reconstructed with the sense of proportion which has been Velázquez' from the first, but its graceful symmetry and that of the tall trees are only incidental. The proportions that matter most are those between tone and tone. It is the harmony of the 'values' which makes the beauty of the scene, the truthfulness of the cool blue-greens and the warm pink-greys which makes the beauty so vital and at the same time so calm.

As before, his return to Spain was followed by an increased activity, which lasted almost to the time of his sudden death. There was a new queen to paint; and her dresses and those of the princesses supplied of themselves a fantasy which Velázquez could render in full merely by an even more audacious simplification of his vision and design, a still more drastic economy of execution. There is no shadow now; only colour brought right forward into the brilliant light, where the gradations are so delicate as to be scarcely perceptible in the modelling of the bright enamel on the sulky little faces. There may be scarcely more than one colour; but it is contrasted so skilfully with the black and grey and white that the picture seems the most highly coloured of all. There may be only a few flicks of solid paint on a ground almost as thin as water-colour; but the accent of light which it creates is so relevant that the painting has more vivacity than the living thing.

There were new subject-pictures painted for the royal palaces; but, judging by the *Mars* or the *Mercury and Argus* in the Prado, we need not much bewail the destruction of most of them. Velázquez saw so independently, he digested and synthesised what he saw so thoroughly, that when he reproduced it in paint it was an act of creation. But the very detachment with which he saw, his lack of any of the *parti pris* which goes with passion and romanticism, made it impossible for him to conjure fervent visions from a symbolical idea.

It is because he took so much of what he painted from real life that he came far nearer to success in the one great subject-picture surviving from this last period: *Las Hilanderas*. It is something of a mystery, for the title describes only the nearer of the two parts into which it is divided, where women of the working class are spinning wool. In the further, three ladies are looking on, while two other women, one wearing a helmet and the other in flowing robes, gesticulate as if they are rehearsing a part or merely posing. In the foreground a 'cello is leant against a stool. In the background hangs a tapestry. The scene woven within its richly coloured border is Titian's *Rape of Europa*, then in the royal collection, of which Velázquez was now the keeper. This is homage to Titian, public acknowledgment of an inspiration which is especially evident in many of the latest pictures. Not only in the copy of *The Rape of*

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† Plate 26

Europa, but in the dress of the woman facing the tapestry, Velázquez has made a rare, if not unique, use of Titian's favourite colour, the pure ultramarine; and it is contrasted, as Titian loved to contrast it, with rose and gold. In the upper room the colours dance in a shaft of brilliant light. In the lower a weaker light falls on colours in warmer, larger masses: contrasting reds, black and brown, the dull greenish-blue which was familiar in the *bodegones*. The whites are muted and the complexions are deeply tanned. The light falls on these women, whose movements have the slow dignity of the peasant, with touching gentleness. Yet the difficulty in grasping these two scenes at once is in contrast with what Velázquez has taught us to expect.

It is sad that, instead of attempting classical subjects, he painted no more scenes from contemporary history like the noble *Surrender of Breda*, done between his two visits to Italy. To posterity, however, his one great portrait group, *Las Meninas* (*The Maids of Honour*),† has come to have the same significance, for it gives a unique representation of the peculiar life of the royal household. The King and Queen are looking at the scene in the picture; and so they appear framed together in the mirror on the wall at the back. In the door beside it is the Queen's Chamberlain. Velázquez is standing before the great canvas, painting the young Infanta Margareta, who has broken her pose to look round at her parents. The lady-in-waiting who kneels to gain her attention with a little red jug on a silver tray has not yet seen the King and Queen; but the other is in the middle of a curtsy. Behind her a nun is talking with a steward dressed in black. In the right-hand corner are two dwarfs, one of whom tries to stir the sleepy dog with a kick.

It is a complicated idea, the kind of visual puzzle in which the more academic of the Baroque painters were wont to indulge; but it has a real purpose, binding together nine people, not to mention the King and Queen, into a scene which is alive and natural. One can study it for hours and always find some new subtlety in the action or in the painting; but one can also take it in at a glance. Everything is in the same focus, comprehensible from the same distance, at once. The light fills the whole tall room and leads on into the world outside; yet there is no doubt who is the centre of it all. The silvery-white dress of the little Infanta is the centre and climax of a wonderful range of tone and colour. By its wealth of tone, and still more by the perfect organisation, what is really the simplest of colour schemes becomes an effect of complex brilliance. Black and white and the intermediate greys predominate; but, just where they are purest, they are enlivened by sudden touches of scarlet-pink which thread themselves through the picture. As a foil to the crisp colours, the familiar, quiet greenish-blue in the dress of the female dwarf and the skirt of the kneeling lady-in-waiting is contrasted with the brownish-pink of the stretcher to the canvas, of the floor and even of the dog. It is a petty moment in a narrow world; but it is made unforgettable by the exquisite dignity of the characters, the silvery beauty of the light, the grandeur of the spacious proportions and, above all, by the wonderful power to unify which has come to Velázquez in a life of thinking with his eyes.

Las Meninas was painted about 1656. In 1660 Velázquez, as Grand Marshal of the Palace, was responsible for the arrangement of the ceremonies on the Isle of Pheasants at the frontier, where the Treaty of the Pyrenees was to be signed with France and arrangements made for the marriage of the Infanta María Teresa to King Louis XIV. On his return to Madrid in July he was seized with a violent sickness. He was dead within a week.

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† Plate 22

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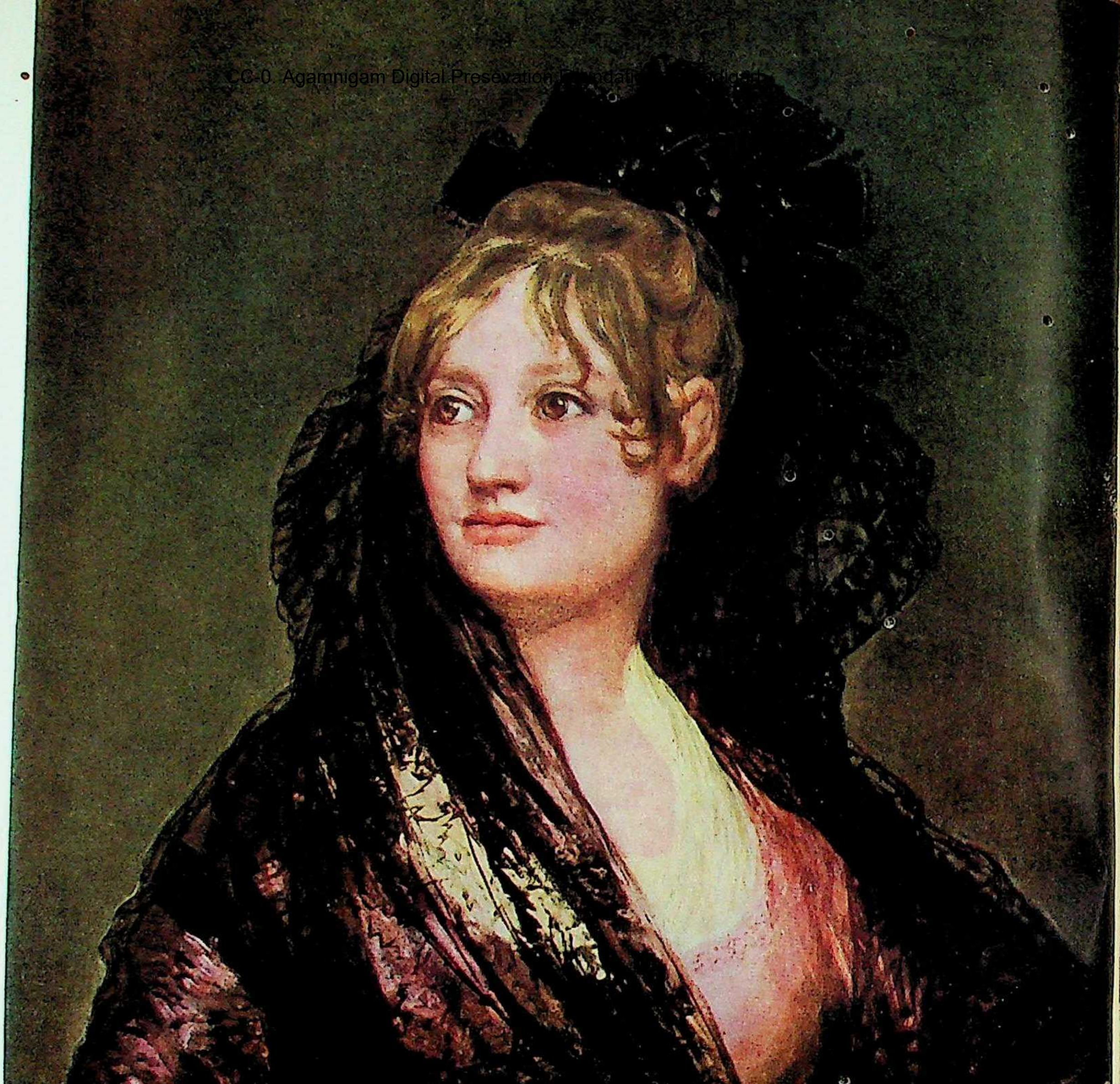

Plate 5

National Gallery

DONA ISABEL COBOS DE PORCEL *By GOYA* (1746-1828)

Original 32″ × 21¼″

CHAPTER VI

VELÁZQUEZ had several other followers in the generation of his son-in-law, Mazo; but it was a century and a half before there appeared, in Goya, a successor who had something new to say to all the world. In the interval the old Hapsburg line of Philip II had petered out with Philip IV's epileptic son, and the Treaty of the Pyrenees had borne fruit in a Bourbon dynasty for Spain. It was a feeble dynasty, under which the nation's decline was all too visible; but it brought with it from the parent stock in France a great tradition of artistic patronage, and its members could appreciate a great artist when he appeared. Like Philip IV, Charles IV will always be best known to posterity for his relations with his Court painter. If it was a less happy relationship—for Goya was cantankerous in the position that he had coveted so much and petitioned so often to get—at least one can the more admire the disinterestedness of the King's enthusiasm.

Francisco de Goya † was born in 1746, in a little town near Saragossa. Later, in Madrid, he is said to have become a popular idol for his physical prowess. Certainly his self-portrait at sixty-nine or seventy shows us an unusually solid and hard-looking head on a bull neck, and under all the finesse of his art there is a peasant toughness. There are legends of wild behaviour all through his life: of his leaving Saragossa to escape the consequences of a fray in which three men were killed, of Madrid becoming too hot for similar reasons, of his working his way to a port with bull-fighters, of his climbing the dome of St. Peter's in Rome, and, when he was famous and spoiled by Madrid Society, of all manner of amorous adventures. Most of the legend belongs to a later date; but it would scarcely have accrued to a conventional man. His body, in fact, was a volcano, whose recurrent eruptions made him feel sick and wretched and old; and it had its complement in the eruptive character of his restless mind.

The 18th is a century of fascinating contrasts. The age of grace and reason and of smooth convention, it is also the age of explosions. Goya, who has left us the most comprehensive picture of it, was one of its most forceful explosions. The endless list of pictures and etchings show him to have been as prolific as Rembrandt; but he could only work in a fury. In 1772, when he had won the second prize from the Academy of Parma, the *Moniteur de France*, in announcing the fact, stated that he could have won the first prize with more application. Twenty-seven years later, when he painted for King Charles IV his frescos in San Antonio de la Florida in Madrid, he is said to have completed the crowd of fifty life-size figures in three months, without resting for a single day. He expected as much from his sitters, for he painted them not in a comfortable series of sittings for an hour, like a Reynolds or a Romney, but at one session; and they often look startled, as if by the gestures and conversation with which he presumably countered their fatigue.

He had been apprenticed at fourteen to a painter in Saragossa, and in Madrid, before he went to Italy, he had been the pupil of the fashionable Francisco Bayeu, whose sister he was to marry in 1773. But his prize-winning picture at Parma is the first of which there is any record. By the time he won the prize, he was already back at Saragossa painting frescos, first in the famous church of the Virgen del Pilar there, and then in that of a monastery a few miles away.

Outside Spain, Goya is known almost wholly as a portrait-painter; but there are ten years between these earliest frescos and his first known portrait, and portraits took the smaller half of his energy. Its chief fruit were frescos and altar-pieces in churches, frescos and large designs on canvas in palaces, and easel pictures or etchings with scenes from real life or phantasmagoria from his imagination.

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† Colour Plate 5, Plates 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35 and 36

Later in life he wrote that he had had three masters: Velázquez, Rembrandt and Nature. These are the sources certainly of his realistic vision and of his vivid narrative power; but he was forgetting then the indubitable inspiration not only of the theatrical and decorative quality of his frescos and painted cartoons, but of the light and air which make them fresh and real. This was old Tiepolo, the last of the great Venetians, who had spent his last eight years at work in Spain, in the royal palace in Madrid and at Aranjuez, where he died while Goya was in Italy. From him Goya had learned not only the gracious style of the *rococo*, but how to dip his brush in light.

By 1775, Goya was settled for good in Madrid. It was an old capital now, with a Society wider, more convivial and more sophisticated than in the days of Velázquez. The painters and sculptors had an Academy, and the best of them had employment at Court. The most profitable form of this was designing for the royal tapestry-factory. It was the custom for the artists to value each other's work; and, since the factory was the favourite interest of King Charles III and his Saxon Queen, it was active in production. Goya became one of its designers within a year, and he soon proved himself the most prolific and successful. His brain so teemed with images that his chief problem must have been to stay his hand and think. He was the opposite to Velázquez in temperament.

By 1780 he had designed thirty tapestries destined for the walls of various suites of rooms in the Pardo Palace. There was a lapse then; but in 1786, when the factory gained a new manager, Goya, with a brother-in-law, Ramón Bayeu, was appointed a salaried designer. He had made only one more suite of designs, however, for an Infante's bedroom at the Escorial, when Charles III died in 1788. The old King had visited his studio, and Goya had painted his portrait; but he had petitioned more than once for a position as Court-painter in vain. He was the favourite rather of the old King's brother, Cardinal Infante Don Luis Antonio, who paid him handsomely for the long series of portraits of himself and his family at Boadilla del Monte. His uncle's enthusiasm was shared by the new King, Charles IV. He and his Queen, María Luisa, liked to dabble in paint themselves, and they preferred Goya's paintings to tapestries. He was made a Court-painter almost at once. The factory went into decline; but Goya made designs for one more set, for the royal office in the Escorial. These were painted by 1791.

For the tapestries he first painted little pictures in oil. For the transfer of these to canvas as oil-paintings on the full life scale he was assigned assistants; and these may be explanation in part of the quality of the large canvases, which is often coarse and even dull. They are only means to an end, however, and the end itself is a decorative stimulus. Life has rarely seemed more appetising, though, than in these decorations of Goya's. In one of the very first, *The Parasol*,† where a dark beauty is seated on the ground, all invitation, dog in lap, in the shade of a parasol held by her companion, he already shows his capacity to render the ardent beauty of his countrywomen. The theatrical force of the design seems justified by the spectacular brilliance of the harsh Southern light. In the very last of the decorations, *La Gallina Ciega*, the glamour is more subtle, rendered with an intoxicating gaiety by the swinging circle of ladies and gallants with hands joined in a sort of blind man's buff. The movements of the stocky, tightly breeched men are light and elastic, and the women are their complement:

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† Plate 31

slim, graceful and fleet of foot. Sex, introduced into Spanish painting almost for the first time by Goya, is straight and virile, in agreeable contrast with the salaciousness of a Boucher or a Fragonard, or with the sweetness and sentimentality of a Gainsborough. Goya in this mood is a Watteau without the pthisis. There is no melancholy afterthought to the rapture of the hour.

But not all his paintings, even for tapestry, are scenes of gallantry. The flavour of reality which is so strong in them is stronger still in some of the glimpses into other kinds of life. Even for royal apartments he painted the life of the people, sometimes the rich and the poor in contrast—and the contrast was very visual then—sometimes, as in the vivid wedding-procession, *La Boda*, the bourgeoisie. It was always in glamorous and decorative terms, with a proper view to the function of the tapestries; but there is a frankness which leads the way to the biting realism of the easel-pictures to which he turned when the tapestry-designing came to an end.

In the intervals of tapestry-designing he painted a great many religious pictures, especially in the years 1780–84, when he painted frescos again at Saragossa, this time in partnership with his brothers-in-law, four lost altar-pieces for the Calatrava College at Salamanca and the huge *Preaching of S. Bernardino of Siena* in S. Francisco el Grande in Madrid. Probably his religious pictures will always be rated lowest in the wide variety of types that he undertook. Their spirit is forced and violent, without the charm of the tapestry designs or the realism of the portraits and *genre* pictures.

Meanwhile, the portraits painted for Don Luis Antonio and that of the First Minister, the Count of Floridablanca, had made his portraiture all the rage in Madrid. At the head of the long procession through his studio were the Duke and Duchess of Osuna, whose portraits he did in 1785. Next year he painted for them the enchanting family group in the Prado; the year after he painted a suite of jolly decorations for the Alameda, their country villa; and next year again he painted for a chapel in Valencia Cathedral two stories from the life of St. Francis Borja, the great general of the Jesuits, from whom the Duchess was descended on her mother's side. She was the most elegant woman in Spain, and the haughtiest. It was in 1795 that he painted the portrait of the Duchess of Alba, and about that time the latter became infatuated with the man and his work, lodging him in her palace, giving him carriages to ride in and feeding his wife at her table off silver plate.

Not that Goya was normally in need of favours in kind. He had his own berlin, drawn by two mules, to take him to and from his villa outside the walls of the city, on the opposite banks of the Manzanares. It was from near there that he painted the brilliant *Fête of San Isidro*,† a gay, theatrical but unusually detailed and painstaking representation of the *fiesta* on St. Isidore's day, when all the city flocked across the river to the broad meadow beyond his gate.

It was there that he entertained on a huge scale, with bizarre and lavish hospitality. His friends were of all kinds. The procession through his studio was made up not only of courtiers and their wives, but of poets and artists and scholars, actresses and bull-fighters and, now and again, a plain man or woman of the people. They are frankly posed, but look tense and highly strung, as if stopped in the middle of their work or play. The women and children seem to stare wide-eyed at this astonishing man, who is looking right through them and working so furiously. The men often smoulder with some of the bitterness which grew upon Goya as he became impatient with the stupidities of the regime, and as increasing deafness made him quick to misunderstand. They are all incredibly real, taking us intimately behind the contemporary scene which Goya has so broadly described.

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† Plate 33

The Duchess of Alba's kindness may have begun in solicitude for the ill-health and despair which followed so soon on his success. In 1792 a long illness left him stone-deaf, and so cut off from the world in a way that must have intensified both his outward vision and his turbulent imagination. It was about this time, when he could not stand before the easel, that he began seriously to etch. It is in the plates that continued to pour out after he was well enough to paint again that he gave full rein to the fantasy of his inspiration, and reached perhaps the full height of his artistry. There are many greater painters; but only Rembrandt is his equal at etching.

It was in his etchings that he first appeared as a critic of the world; but it was very little time before a new type of picture appeared. *The Interior of a Madhouse* † is one of a series of small pictures, exhibited at the Academy in 1794, in which "in order to occupy my imagination, mortified in the consideration of my ills . . . I have succeeded in making observations for which there is no occasion in commissioned works, where caprice and invention have no enlargement." Did his imagination really need exercise? Or did he set out to conquer self-pity by visualising the miseries of the more unfortunate? His most rebellious sentiments are to be found in his etchings of the Horrors of War or in such plates as the prison scene inscribed "The punishment is as barbarous as the crime"; but there are little paintings of executions and tortures and prison miseries which show both a horrified curiosity and an indignant compassion. In the little *Prison Scene* in the Bowes Museum at Barnard Castle the rapid drop in the height of the arches caused by the exaggerated perspective gives a terrible finality and emphasis to the despair of the huddled figures, while the soft mistiness of the blue-grey light both increases their isolation and suggests compassion.

In time the waves sent out by the French Revolution came to lap against the dilapidated throne in Madrid. In 1808 Charles abdicated in favour of his son Ferdinand; but almost immediately Napoleon expelled both of them to enthrone his brother Joseph. The popular rising against Bonaparte on May 2nd in Madrid resulted only in bloodshed and executions. It needed Wellington to expel him, before Ferdinand could return in 1814.

Goya had been made a First Painter by Charles in 1799; but he remained at Court throughout these events, to paint the triumph of Joseph Bonaparte, Wellington on his charger, and finally Ferdinand again. Ferdinand VII told him he deserved exile and even hanging, but that he was a great artist and so would be forgiven; and he was confirmed in his post of First Painter. *The Third of May 1808* † and its pendant of the street-fighting the day before, vivid and ghastly pieces of pictorial journalism, were painted, no doubt, as atonement to the populace of Madrid. Goya had believed himself their hero; but his support of Bonaparte, though prompted perhaps by the hope of reforms, had made him so unpopular that he had for a time to go into hiding.

He was not happy with the despicable Ferdinand. His wife had followed nineteen of their twenty children to the grave, and, though a distant cousin, a Madame Weiss, came to keep house with him and brought a child whom he loved, he became a recluse during the last ten years at his villa outside Madrid. Two rooms of it he filled with painted phantoms of his own imagination, weird as any in his etchings, and more terrible in the solidity of the oil medium and their almost life-size dimensions. He painted several great altar-pieces, however, and many portraits. That of Ramón Satue, now in the Rijksmuseum, is perhaps the most nobly characterised and most solidly constructed that he ever painted. It is dated 1823.

Next year, after getting six months' leave to take the waters in France for the sake

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† Plate 35

† Plate 36

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of his health, he broke up his household, to return to Madrid again only for a few months in 1826. At the age of seventy-eight he paid his first and only visit to Paris, and then settled with Madame Weiss in a little villa which he had taken at Bordeaux. There he lived more happily than before, free from his habitual pains, full of interest in life and painting it vigorously until he died, in 1828.

The common saying that Goya bridges the 18th to the 19th century has a meaning which is more than chronological. The free fancy of his etchings is something which belongs to no period; and the similar subjects which he painted in a broad, unstylish fashion in the early years of the 19th century are the beginnings of its long, romantic experiment. Yet he had begun as the greatest interpreter in paint of the old century, making a picture of it more comprehensive than any that is left of any age by any other artist. From the first he had appreciated and exploited in his composition its theatrical spirit, the way its men and women dressed themselves for a stage, after dressing the stage as a suitable scenic background for themselves. Before long his colours, with their silvery delicacy and the filmy quality of the paint itself, had become perfectly expressive of its wit and nervous grace.

Beneath the elegance, however, there was a vital realism, which grew in keenness until it stares at us from the very body of his nude *Maja*.† Exclusive claims to be realists were made by all the younger artists of the succeeding generations: Ingres, Delacroix, Courbet. Put Goya beside each of these in turn, and even Courbet looks vague and sentimental, even though the admiration and study of Goya had grown in France with each generation. Delacroix, the first rebel against the colourless, academic realism of Ingres, was the godson of Guillemardet, at one time French envoy in Madrid. He was brought up, therefore, with the great portrait of his godfather by Goya which now hangs in the Louvre. He is said to have copied all the *Caprichos*, the first and least terrible set of Goya's etchings. But Goya would have sided with Delacroix scarcely more than with Ingres. Before they had begun their quarrel of line *versus* colour, he is quoted as having said that in Nature colour exists no more than line; there is only light and shade—the dictum of a man more realistic than either.

It sounds like Tintoretto speaking; but Goya was taking too much for granted, perhaps, his inheritance from Velázquez and his own light's beautiful colour. With his urge to describe and narrate, his impatience of composition, he was the most instinctive, the least æsthetic of all great artists. Yet even in the little *Prison Scene* of the Bowes Museum there is all the essence of a "nocturne" by Whistler, that most conscious æsthete of the new century.

Velázquez, however, had shown that realism is not incompatible with the most deliberate composition in colour; and in France the achievement of a further degree of realism by Manet coincides both with the extreme emphasis of colour and the rediscovery of Velázquez. This too, however, is due to Goya. He is the greatest interpreter not only of his age, but—and here he was unique—of his country. It was the wide picture of Spain that he had painted which drew the attention of the world to all her artists and led to the rediscovery even of El Greco. El Greco, Velázquez and Goya—these, rather than the painters of Italy or Flanders or Holland, have made the tradition which forms the immediate foundation of the Modern School of painting.

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† Plate 32

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Bartolomé Bermejo, working 1474–1495
Alonso Sánchez Coello, 1531/1532–1588
Domenikos Theotokopoulos, known as "El Greco," 1541–1614
Juan Pantoja de la Cruz, 1551–1608
Francisco Ribalta, 1551/1555–1628
Francisco Pacheco, 1564–1654
Francisco Herrera the Elder, *c.* 1576–1656
Jusepe Ribera, 1589–1652
Francisco Zurbarán, 1598–*c.* 1664
Diego Rodríguez de Silva y Velázquez, 1599–1660
Juan de Pareja, *c.* 1610–1670
Juan Bautista Martínez del Mazo, *c.* 1612(?)–1667
Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, 1618–1682
Francisco Bayeu y Subias, 1734–1795
Ramón Bayeu y Subias, 1746–1793
Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, 1746–1828
Pablo Ruiz y Picasso, born 1881

ACKNOWLEDGMENT is made to Anderson for assistance in the provision of photographic prints for Plates 11, 12, 13, 16, 18, 20, 22, 23, 26, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35 and 36. Plate 27 was supplied by W. F. Mansell, Plates 6 and 25 by A. C. Cooper, and Plate 14 is an Arxiu Mas photograph. Colour Plates 4 and 5 are reproduced by permission of the Medici Society. The publishers would also like to express their appreciation of Mr. Neil MacLaren's help in obtaining photographs.

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IN MONOCHROME (Photogravure)

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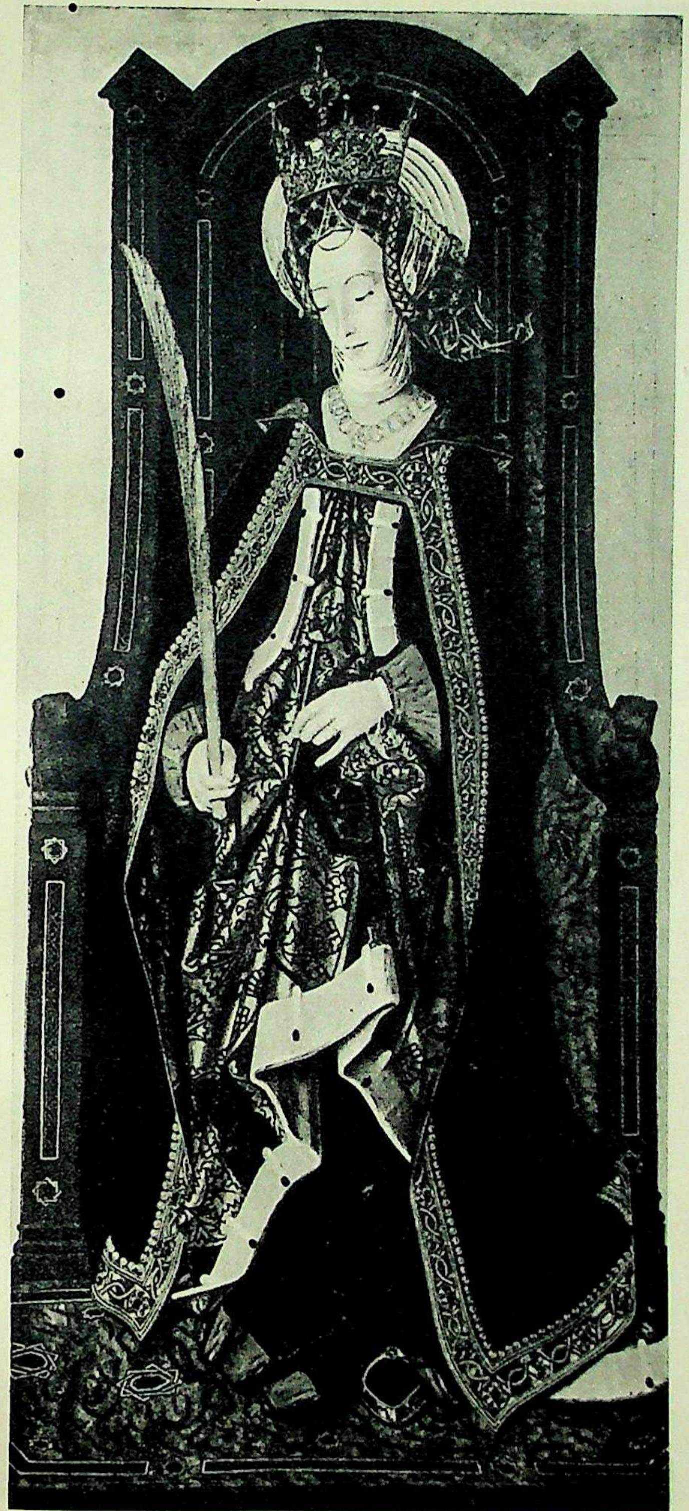

Plate 6 *Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, Mass.*

ST. ENGRACIA *By* BERMEJO (*working* 1474-95)

Original 64½″ × 28½″

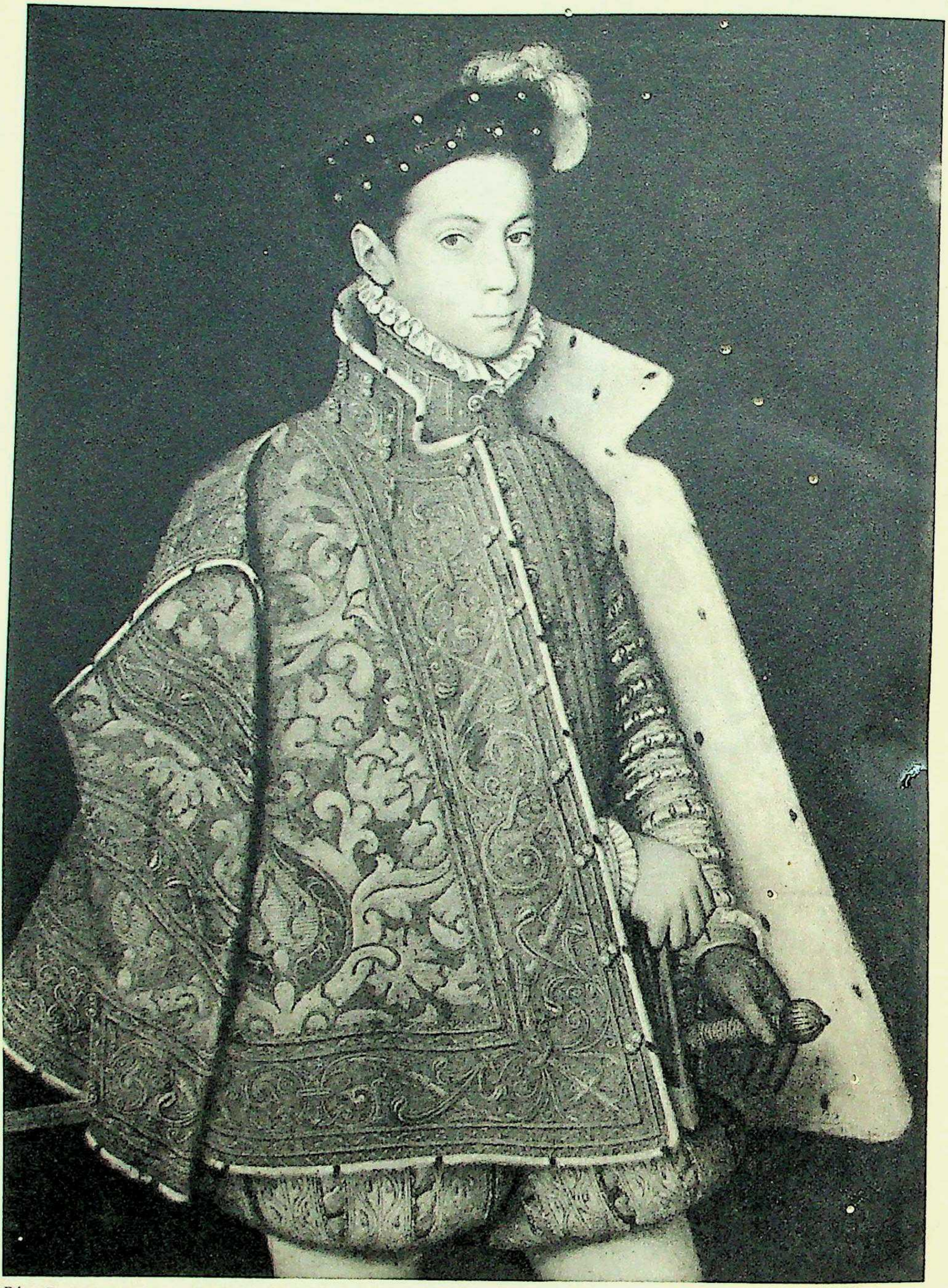

Plate 7

National Gallery of Ireland

PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG MAN (*probably* ALESSANDRO FARNESE)

By A. SANCHEZ COELLO (1531/32-1588)

Original 42″ × 31″

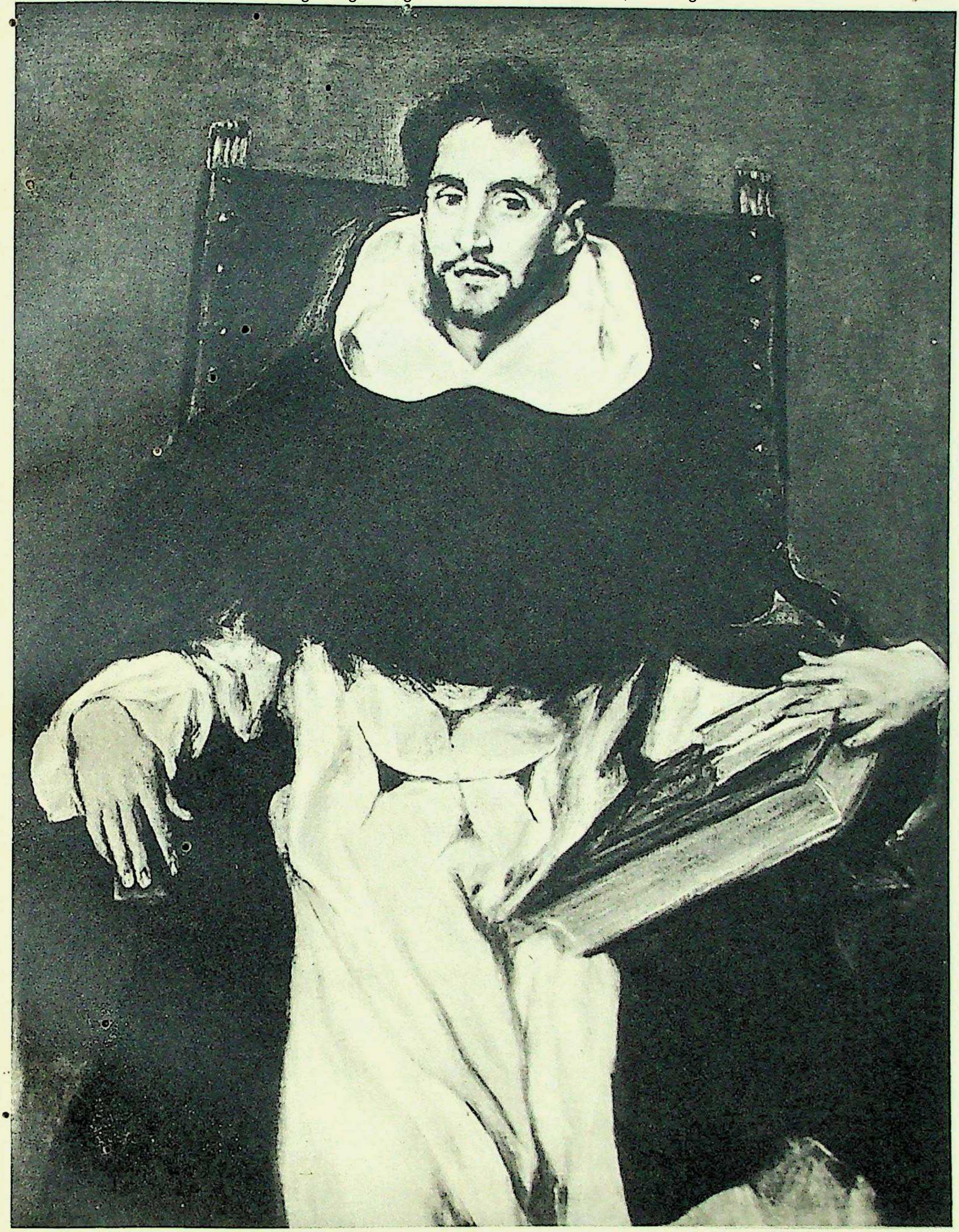

Plate 8

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Mass.

FRAY HORTENSIO FELIX PARAVICINO *By* EL GRECO (1541-1614)

Original $44\frac{1}{2}'' \times 33\frac{7}{8}''$

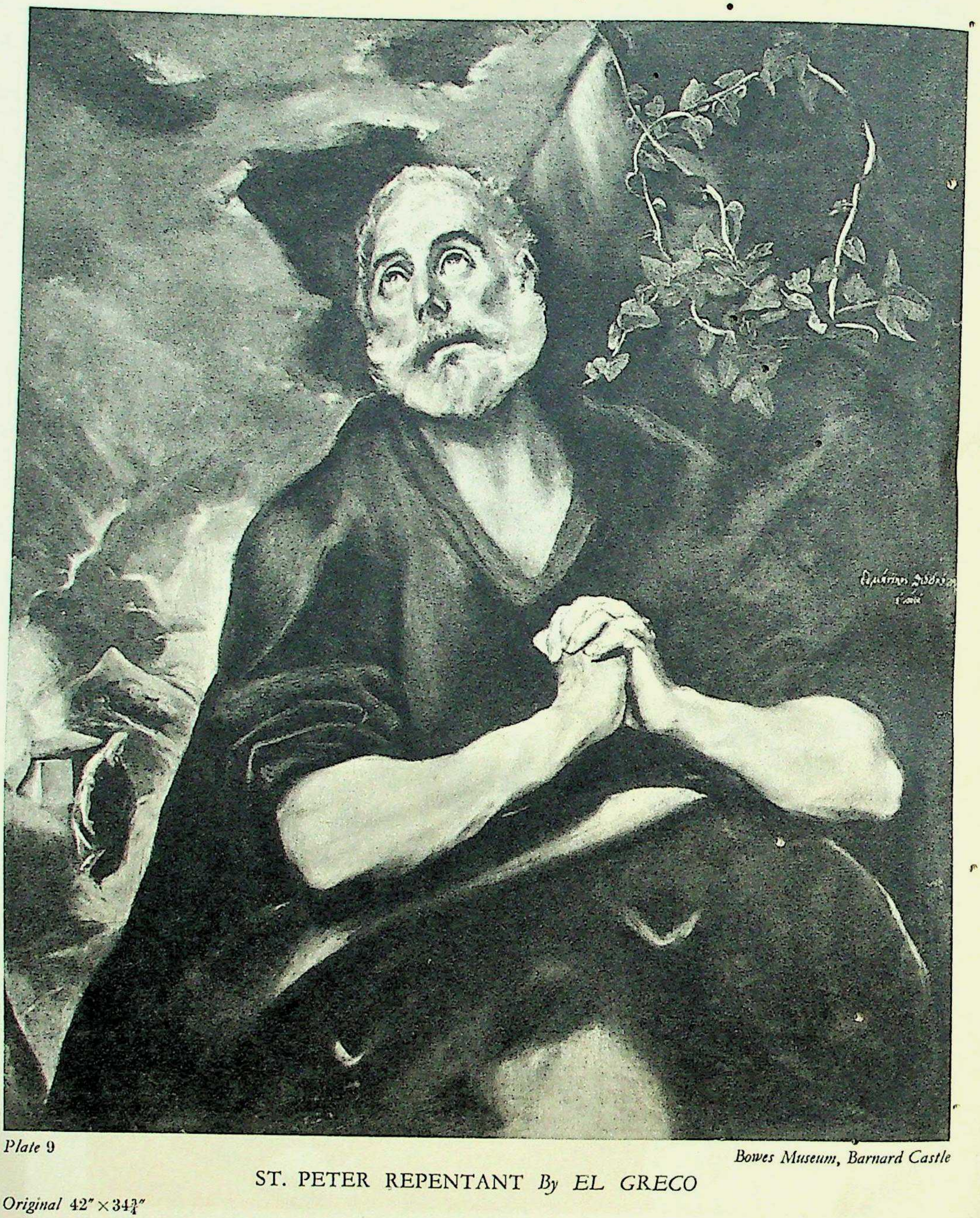

Plate 9

Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle

ST. PETER REPENTANT *By* EL GRECO

Original 42″ × 34¼″

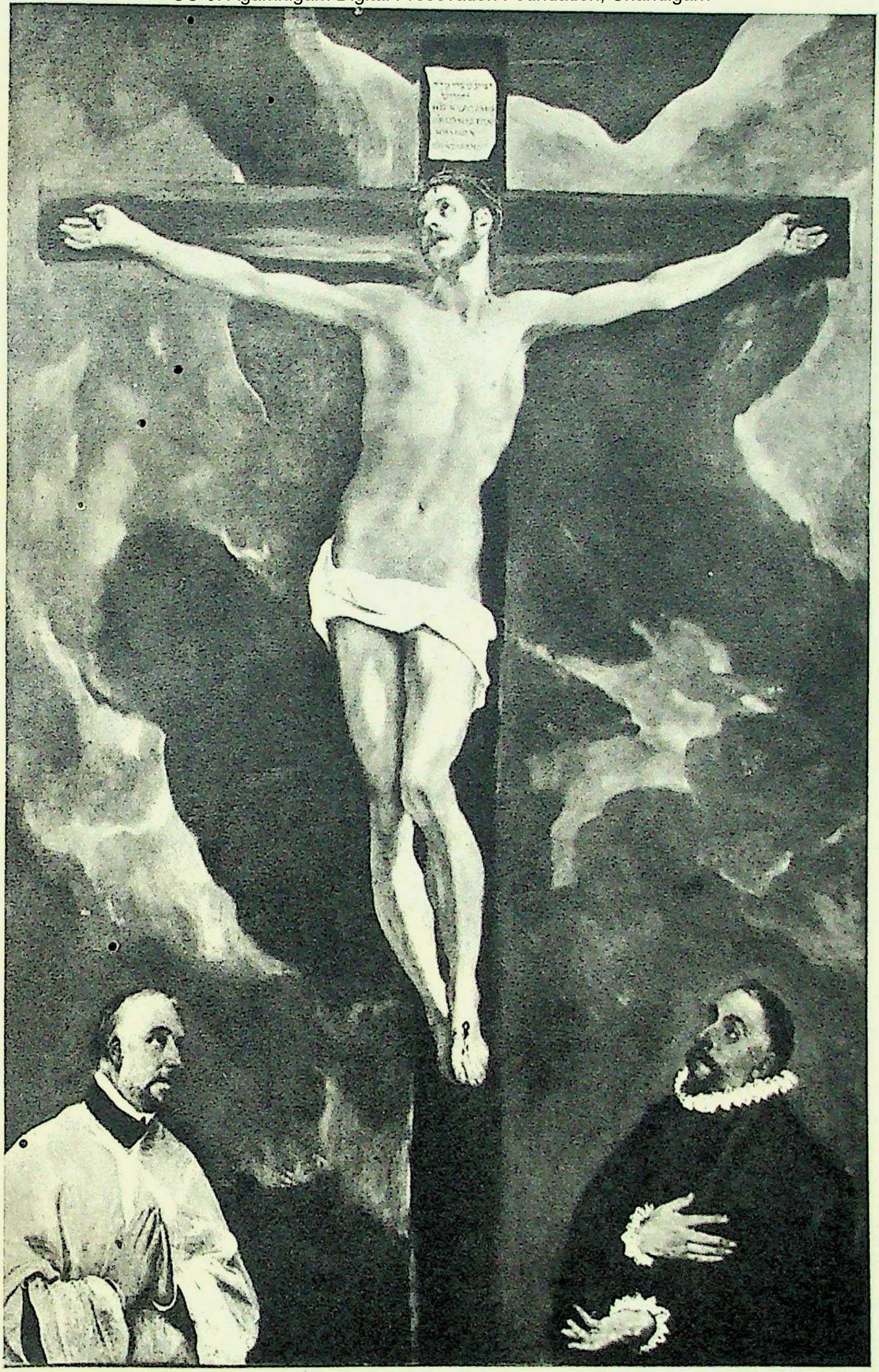

Plate 10 *Louvre*

CHRIST ON THE CROSS *By EL GRECO*

Original 98$\frac{3}{8}$″ × 70$\frac{7}{8}$″

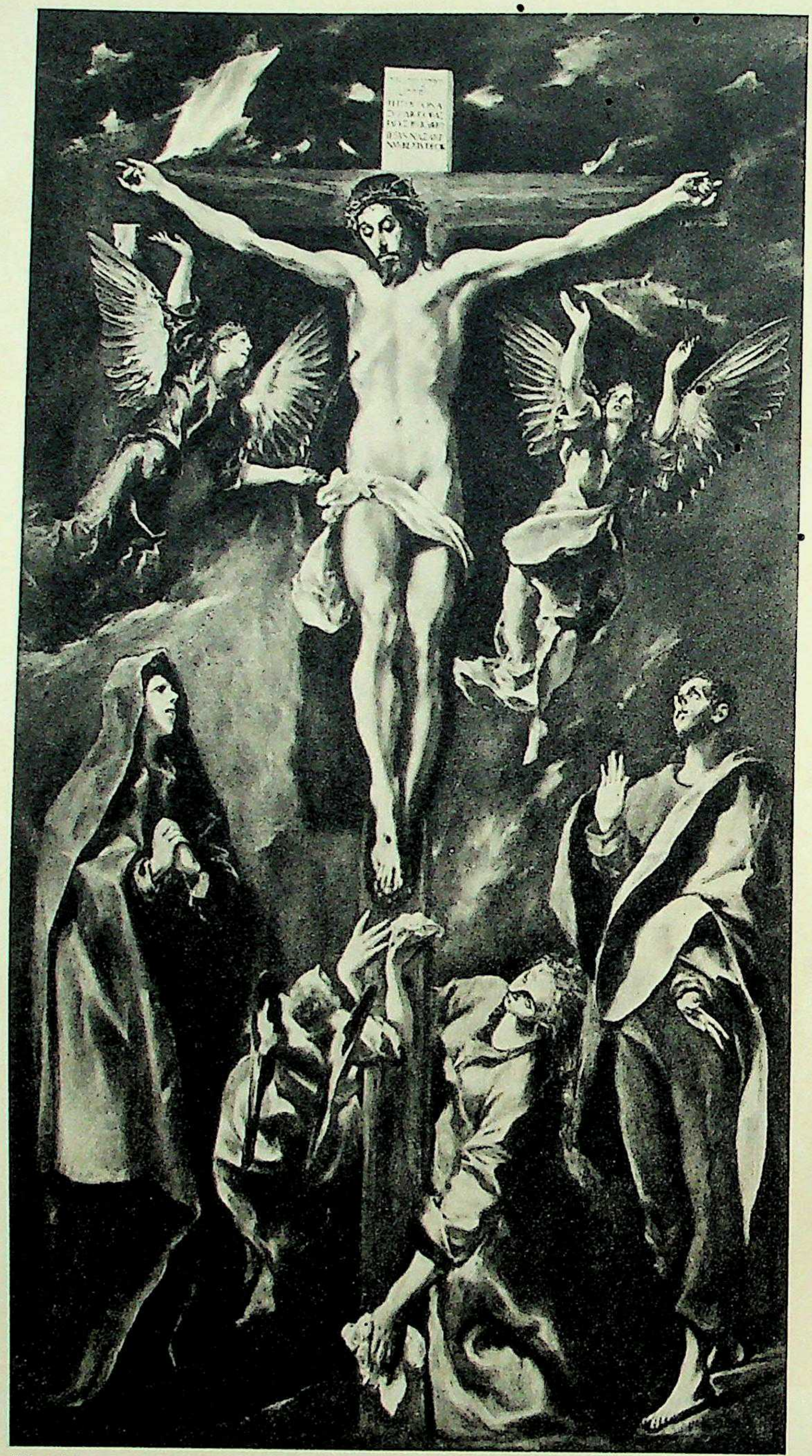

Plate 11

Prado, Madrid

THE CRUCIFIXION *By* EL GRECO

Original $122\frac{7}{8}'' \times 66\frac{1}{2}''$

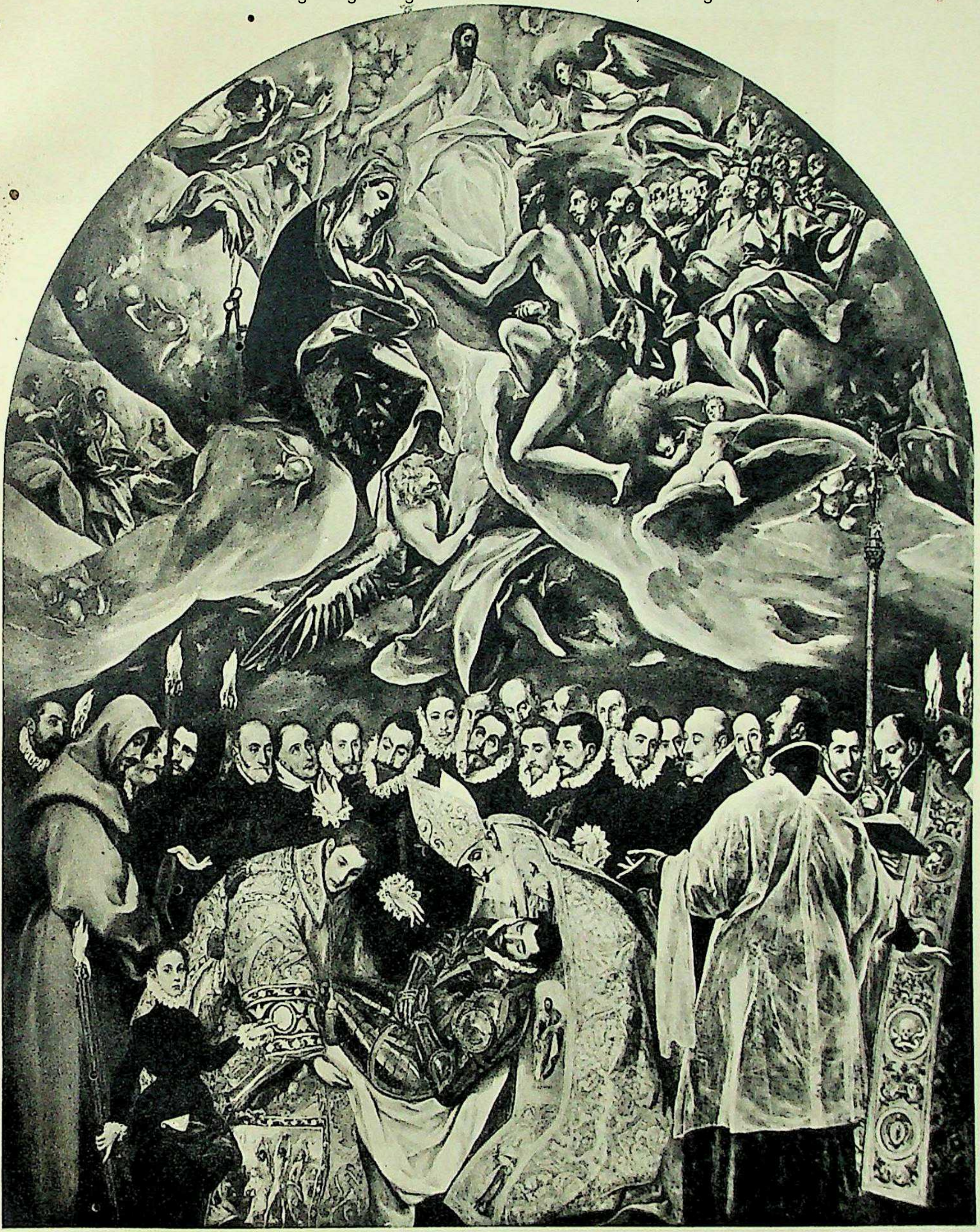

Plate 12

Santo Tomé, Toledo

THE BURIAL OF COUNT ORGAZ *By* EL GRECO

Original 189″ × 141¾″

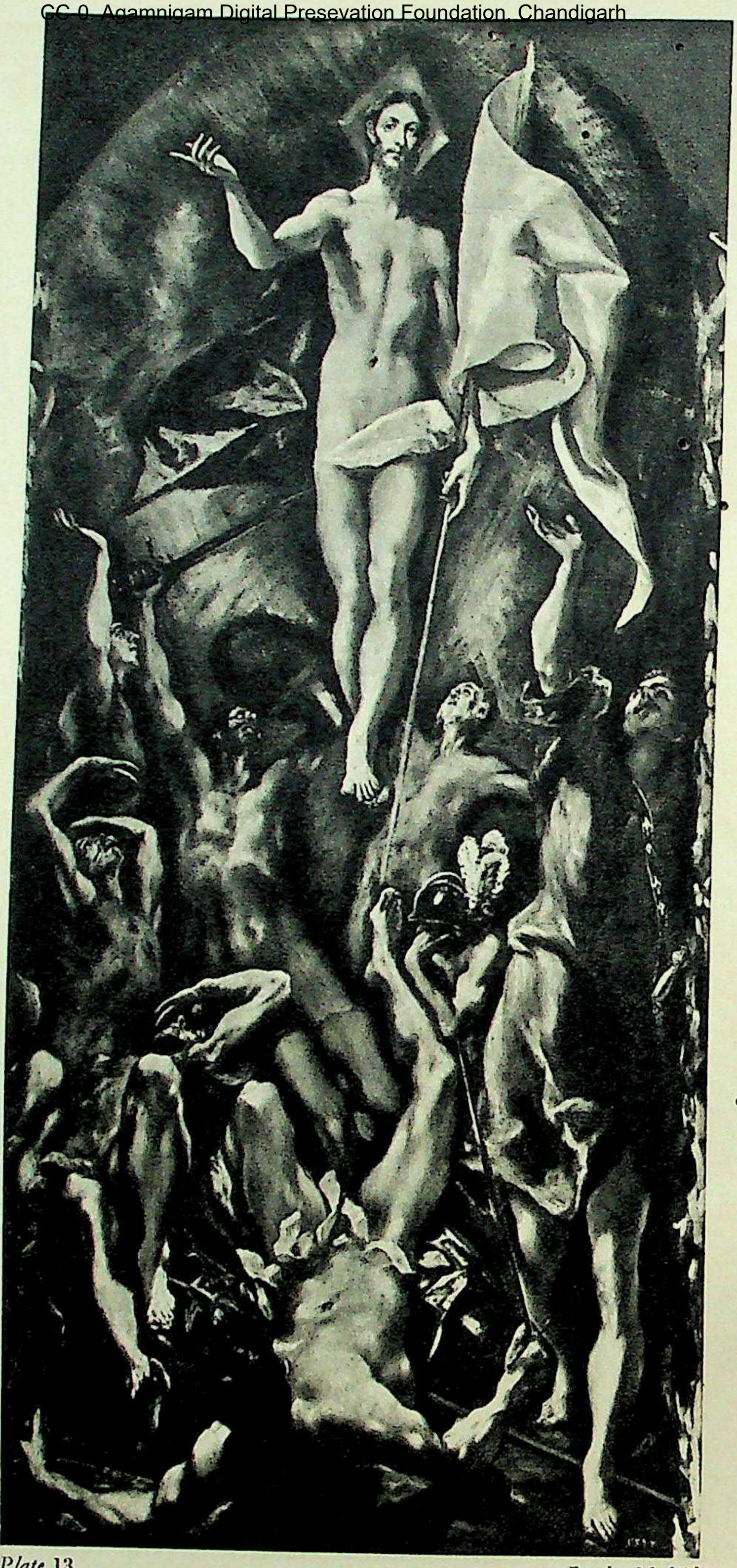

Plate 13

Prado, Madrid

THE RESURRECTION *By* EL GRECO

Original 108¼″ × 50″

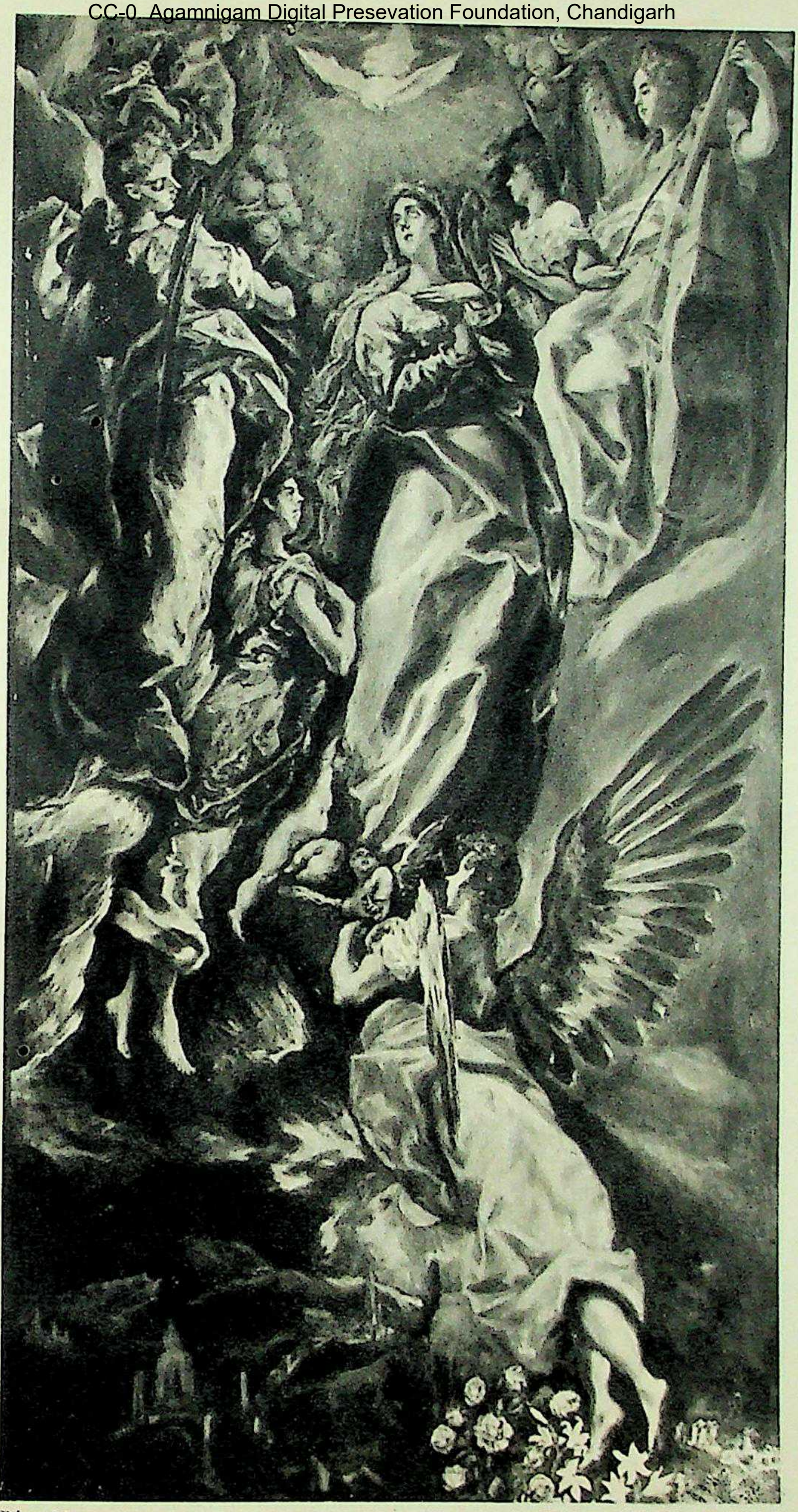

Plate 14

Museum of S. Vicente, Toledo

THE ASSUMPTION *By* EL GRECO

Original 128″ × 66⅞″

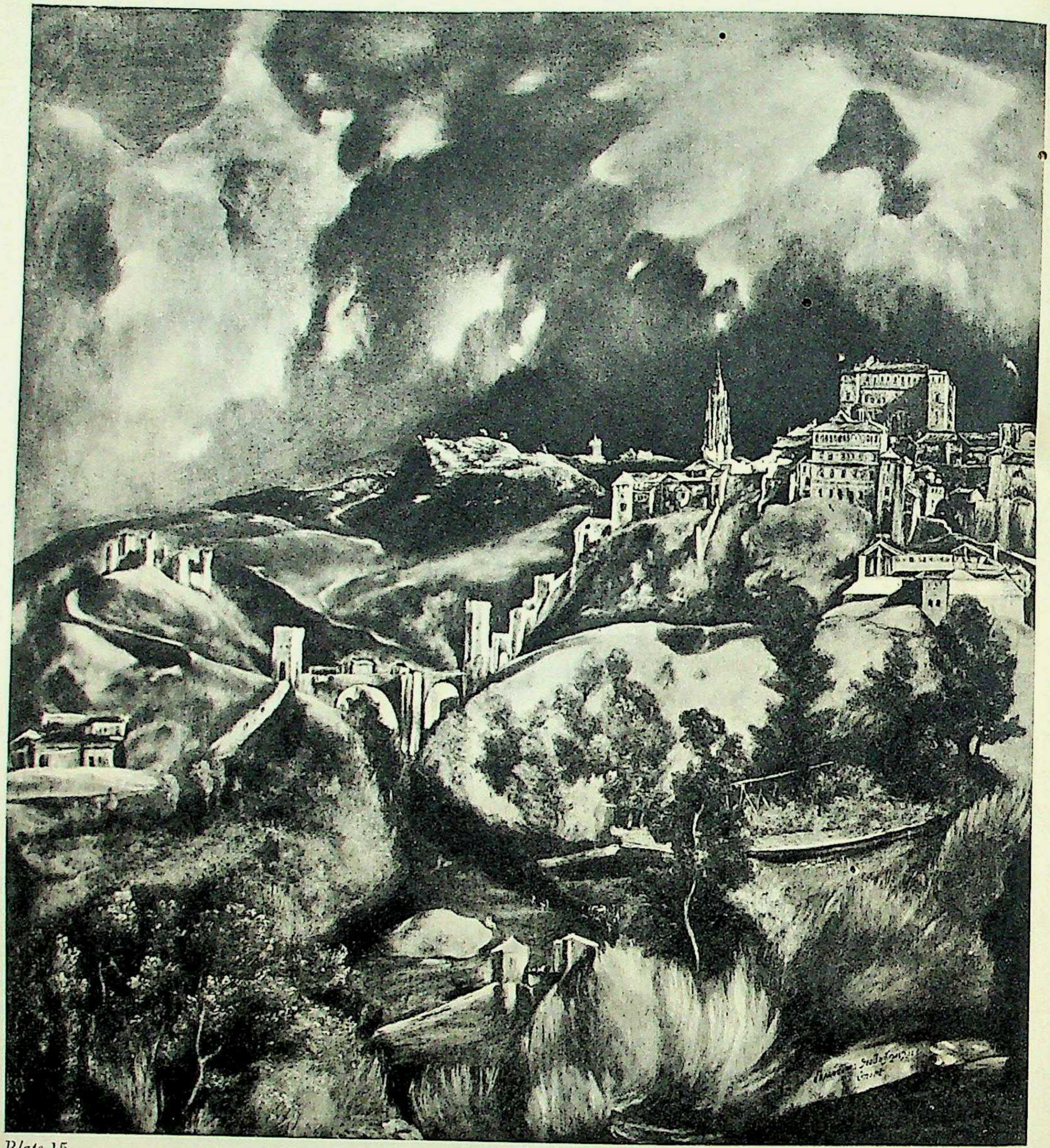

Plate 15

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

TOLEDO *By* EL GRECO

Original 48″ × 42¾″

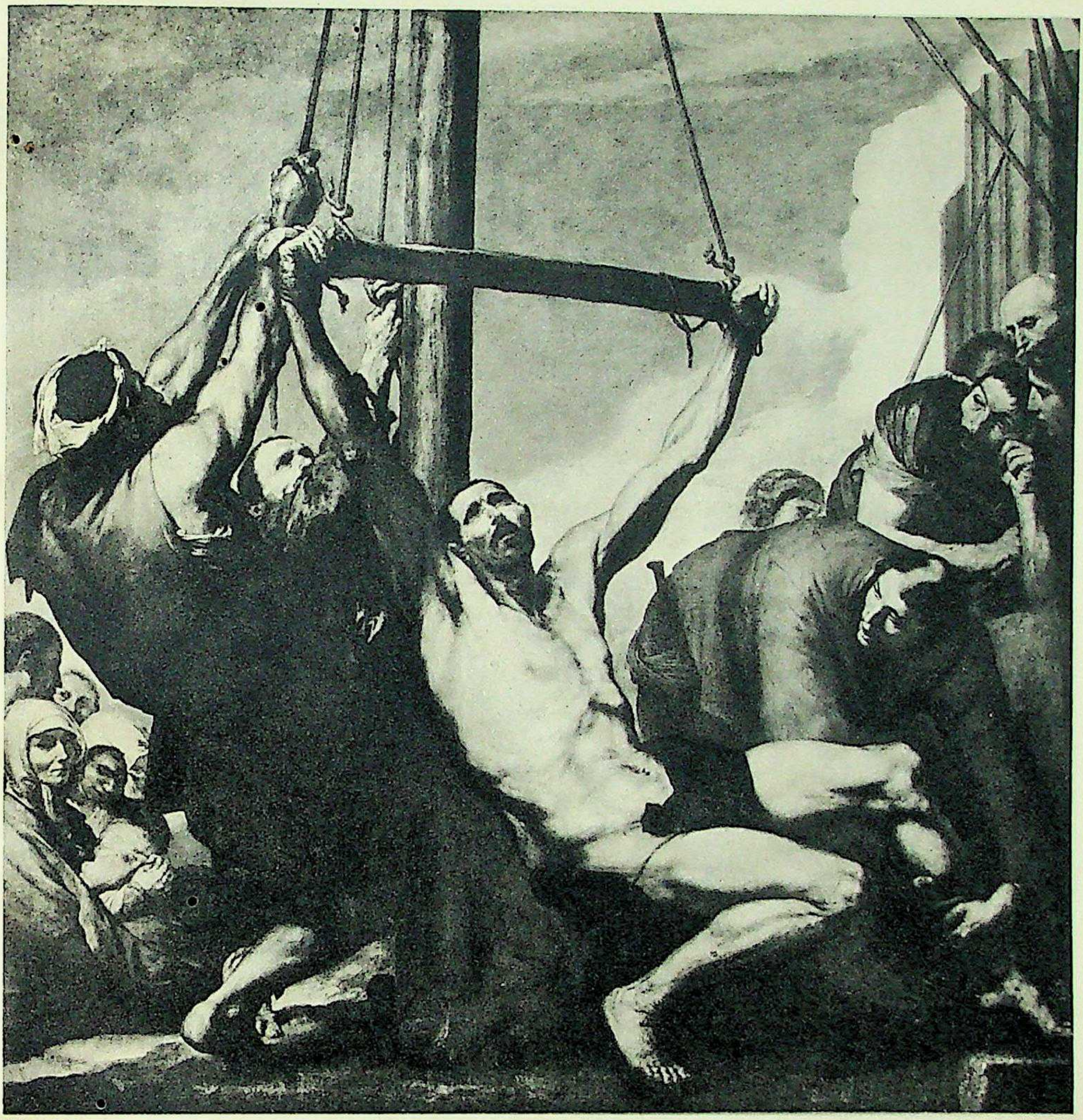

Plate 16 *Prado, Madrid*

THE MARTYRDOM OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW *By JUSEPE RIBERA* (1589-1652)

Original 91″ × 92″

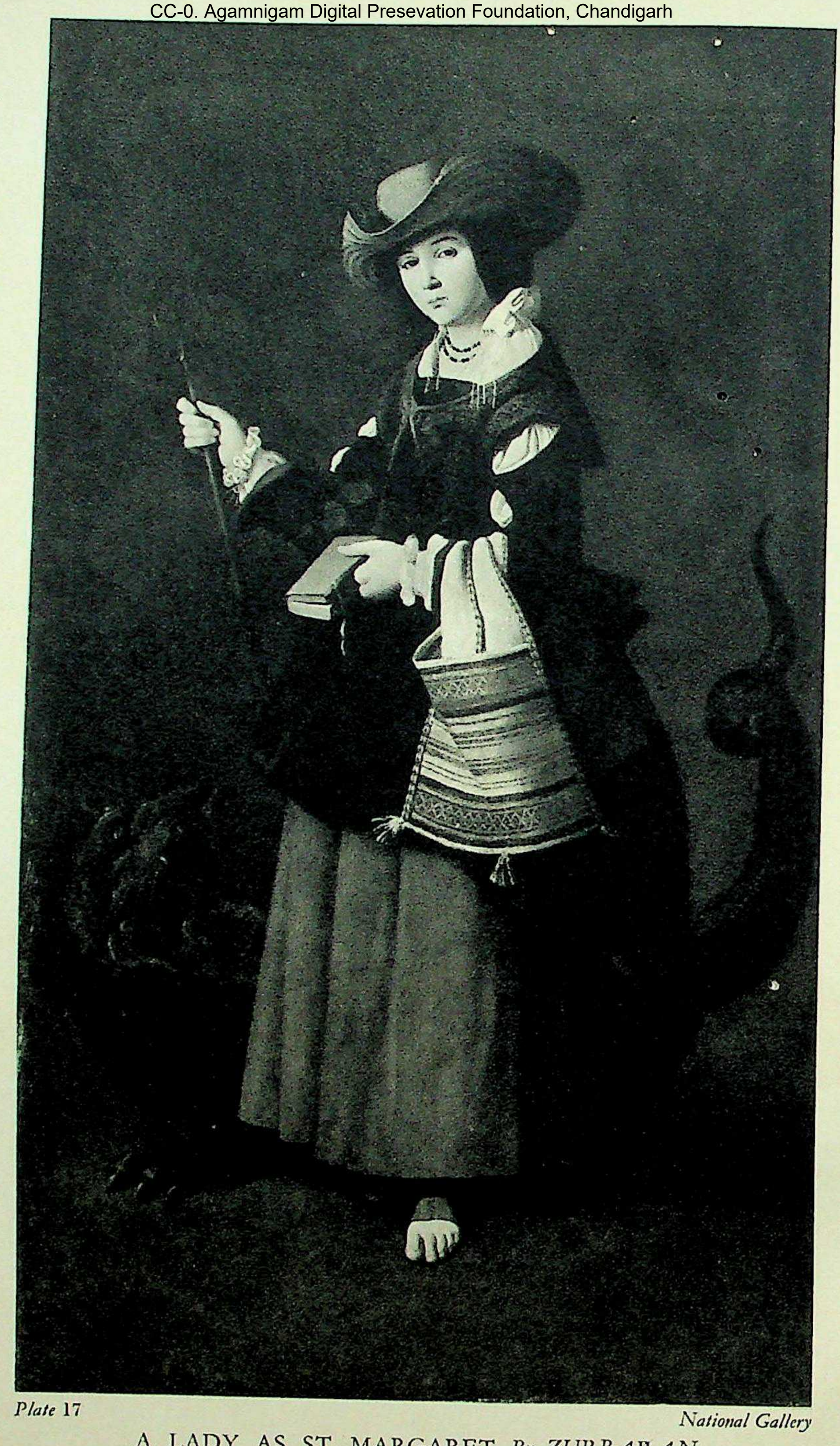

Plate 17

National Gallery

A LADY AS ST. MARGARET *By* ZURBARAN

Original 76¼″ × 44¼″

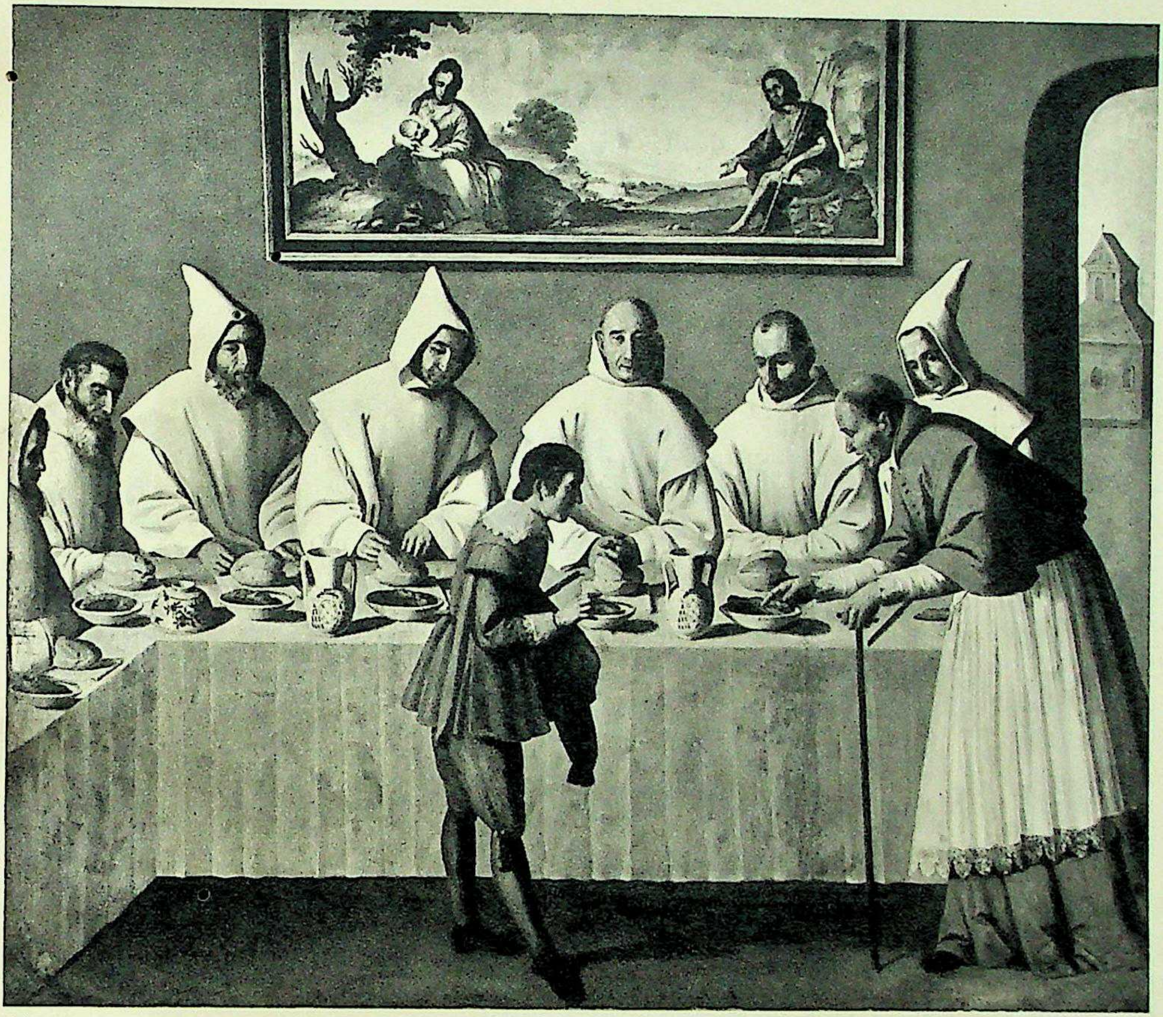

Plate 18

Provincial Museum, Seville

THE MIRACLE OF ST. HUGO *By ZURBARAN* (1598-*c.*1664)

Original 103″ × 125″

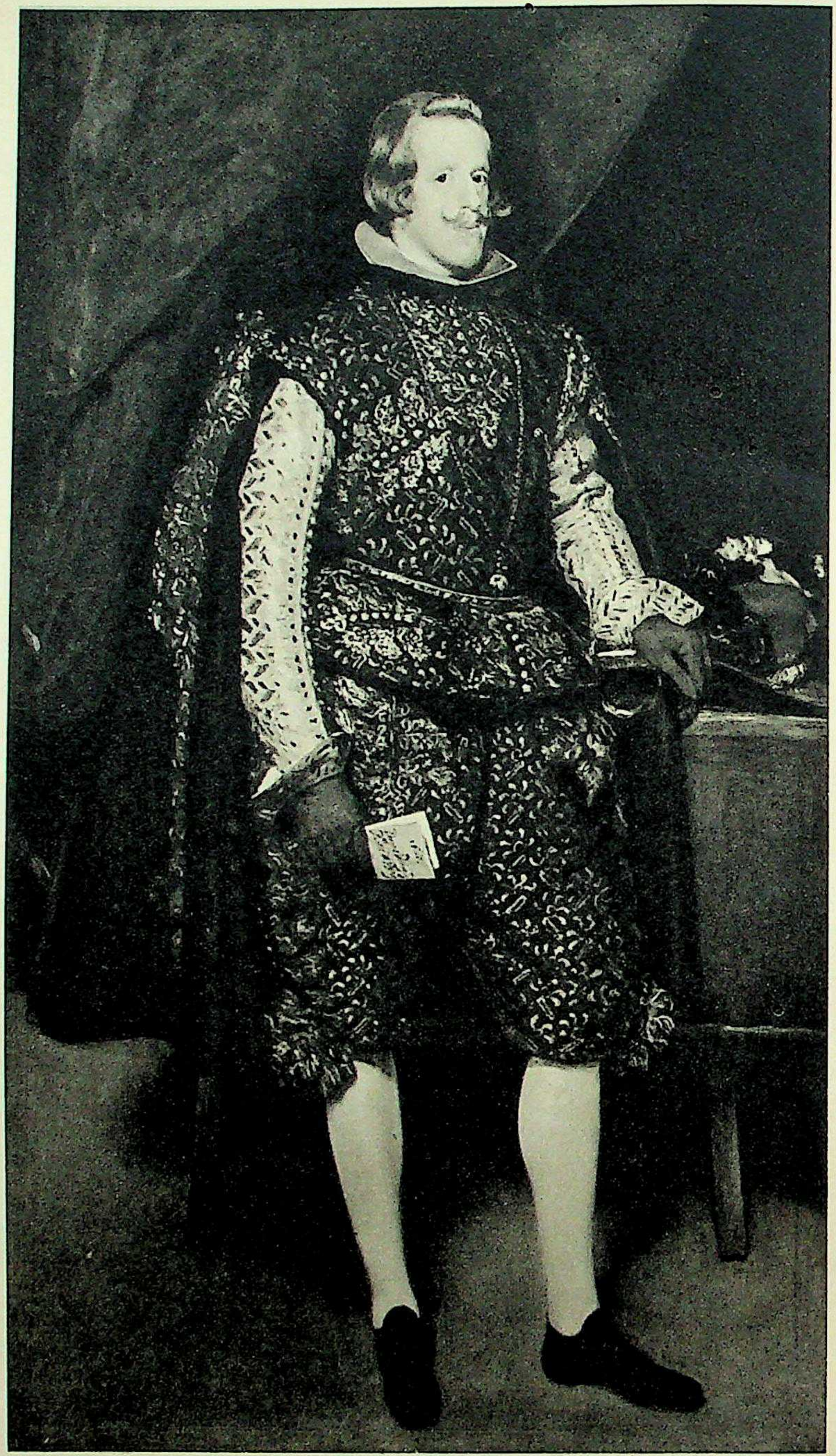

Plate 19 *National Gallery*

PHILIP IV IN BROWN AND SILVER *By VELAZQUEZ*

Original 78″ × 44″

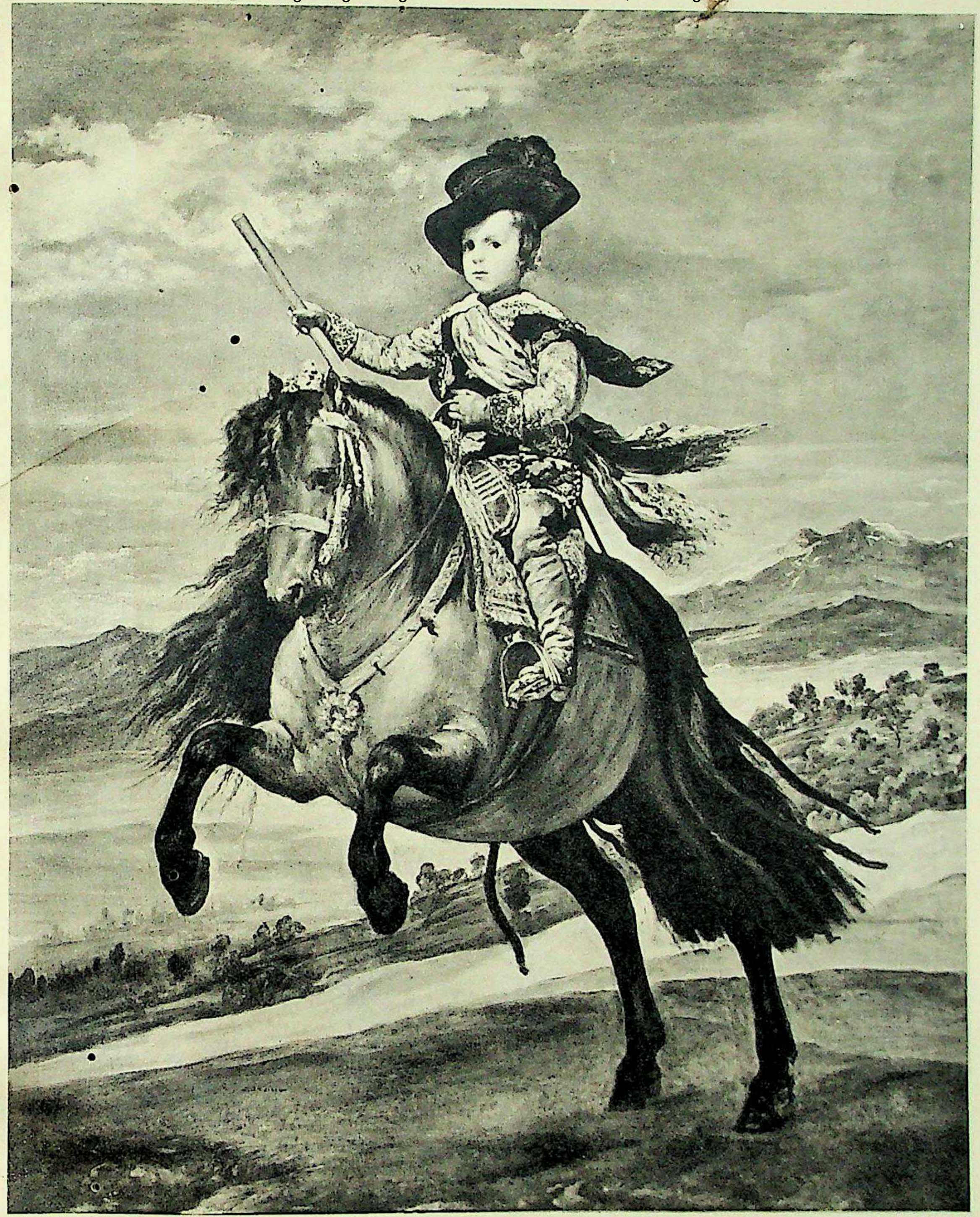

Plate 20 *Prado, Madrid*

DON BALTHASAR CARLOS ON HORSEBACK *By VELAZQUEZ* (1599-1660)

Original 82″ × 68″

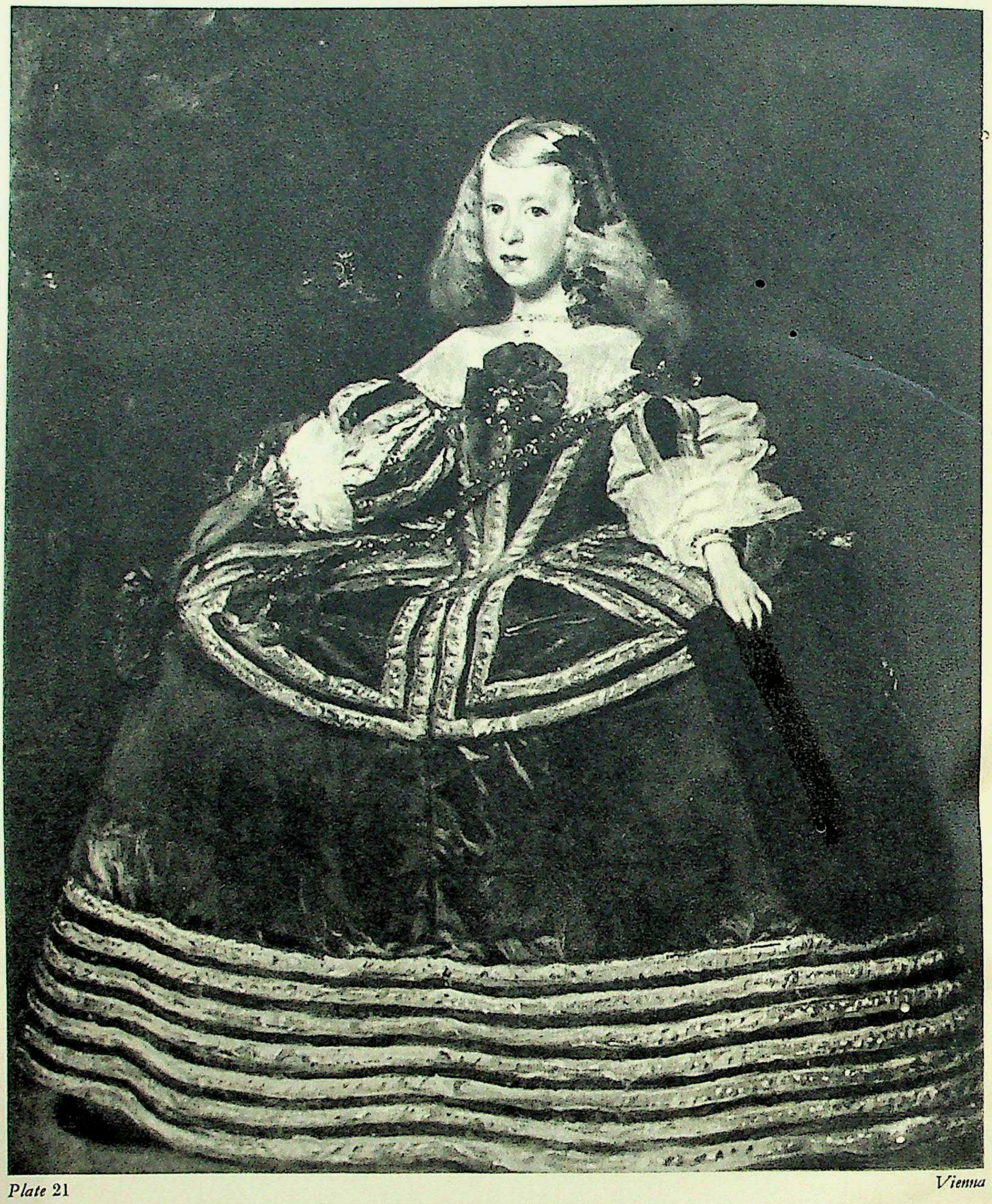

Plate 21 *Vienna*

THE INFANTA MARGARETA IN BLUE *By VELAZQUEZ*

Original 50″ × 42″

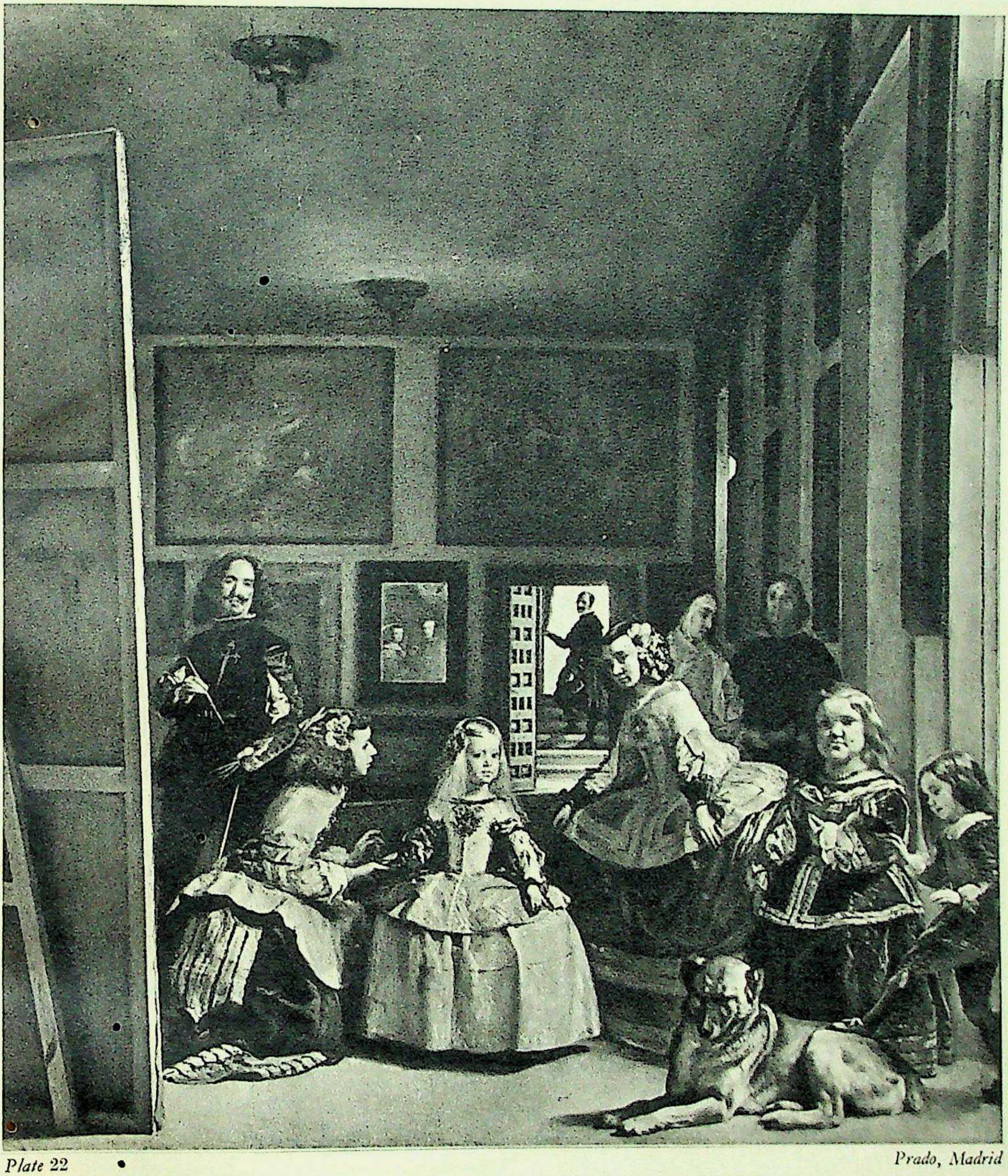

Plate 22 *Prado, Madrid*

THE MAIDS OF HONOUR *By VELAZQUEZ*

Original 125¼″ × 108½″

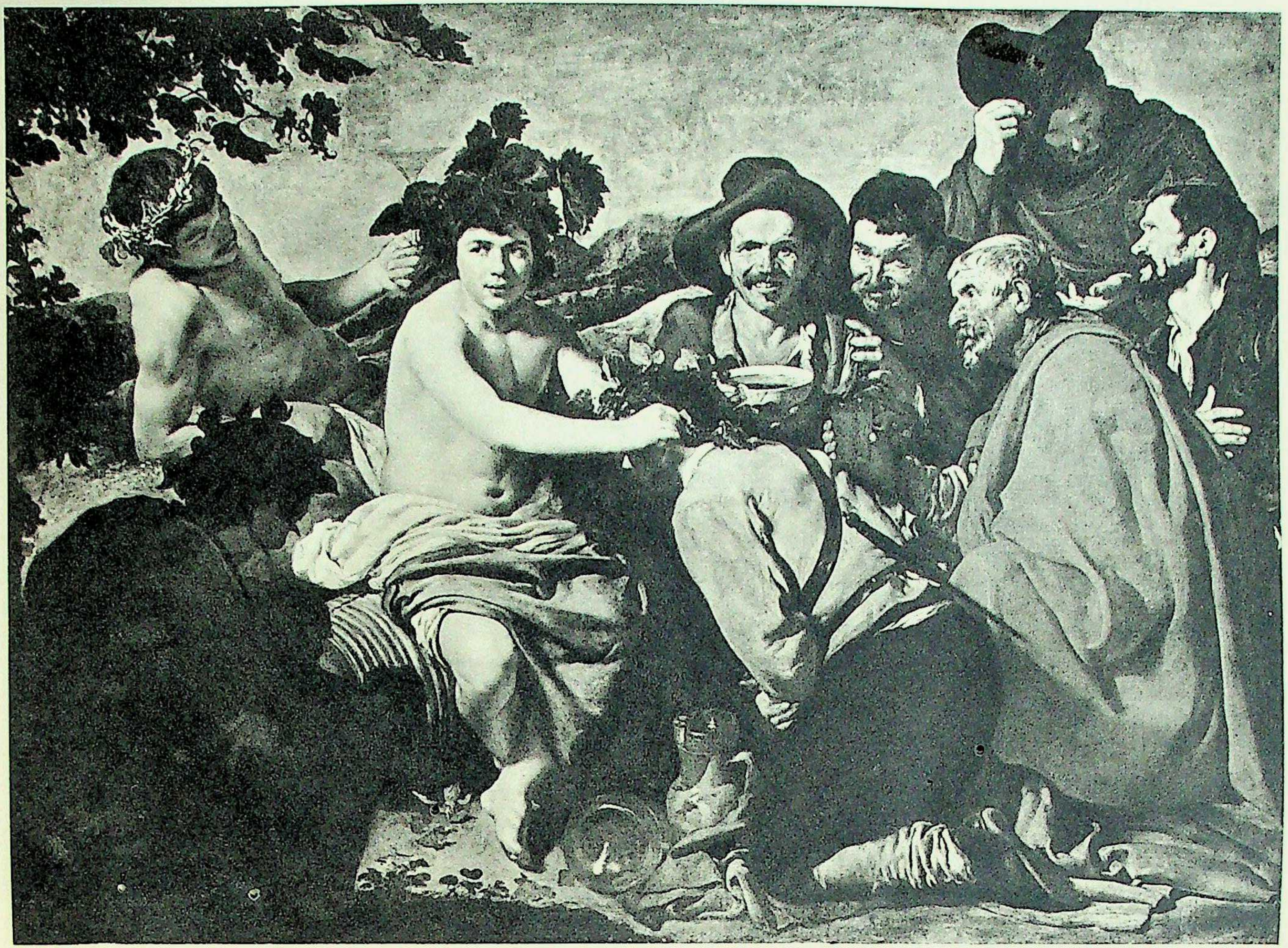

Plate 23

Prado, Madrid

THE TOPERS *By* VELAZQUEZ

Original 61″ × 88½″

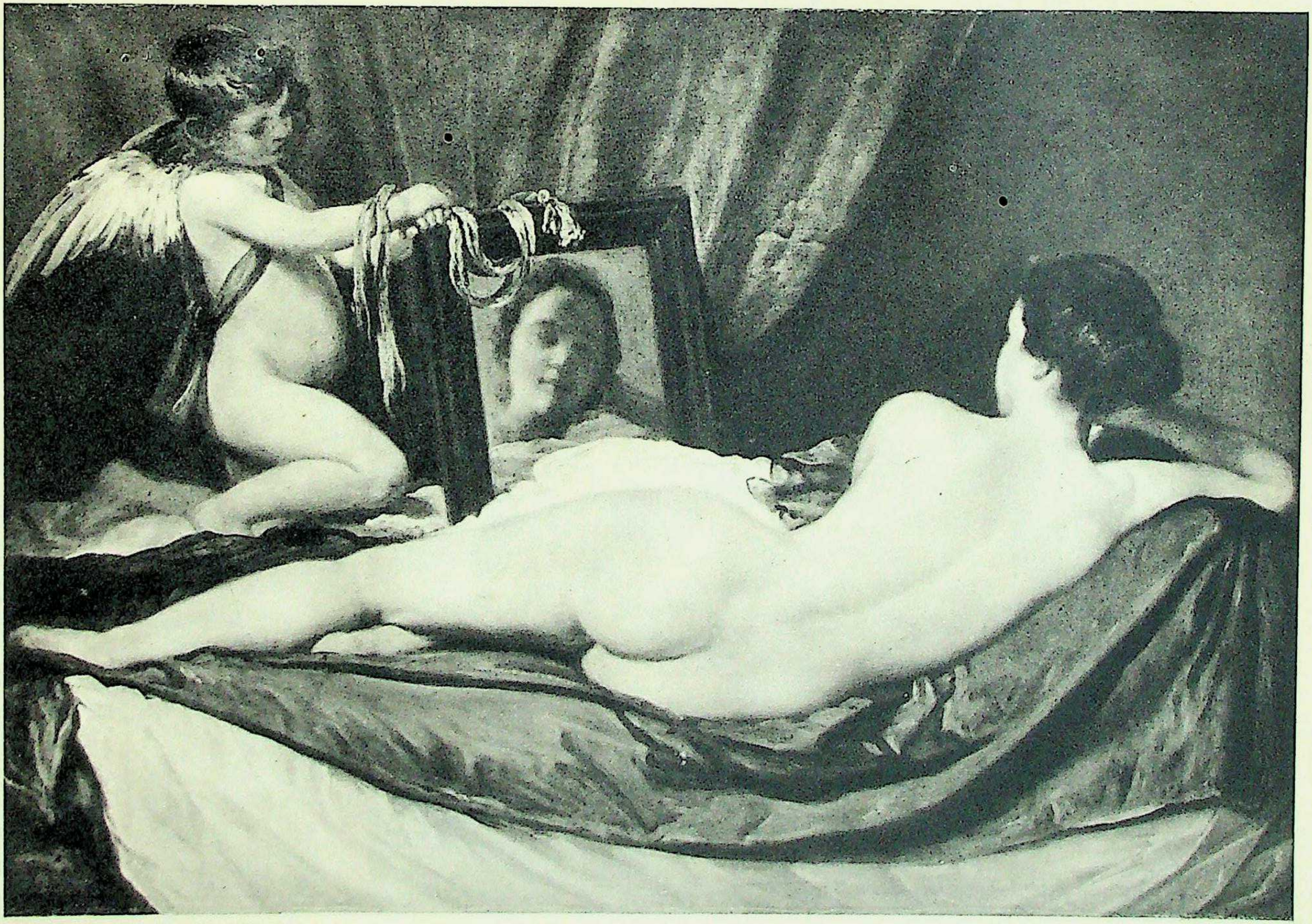

Plate 24

National Gallery

VENUS AND CUPID *By* *VELAZQUEZ*

Original $48\frac{1}{2}'' \times 69''$

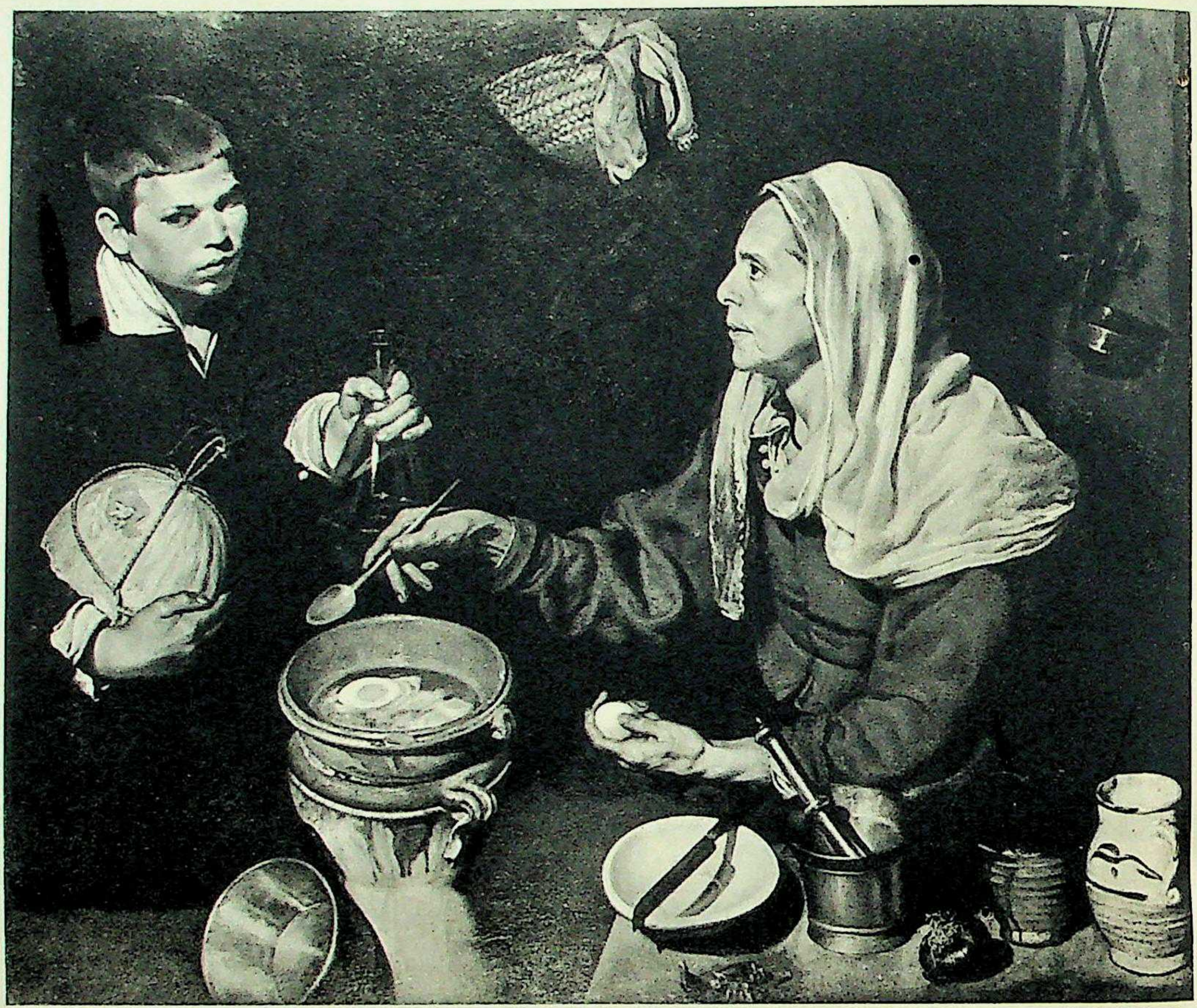

Plate 25 *Cook Collection*

OLD WOMAN FRYING EGGS *By VELAZQUEZ*

Original 39″ × 50½″

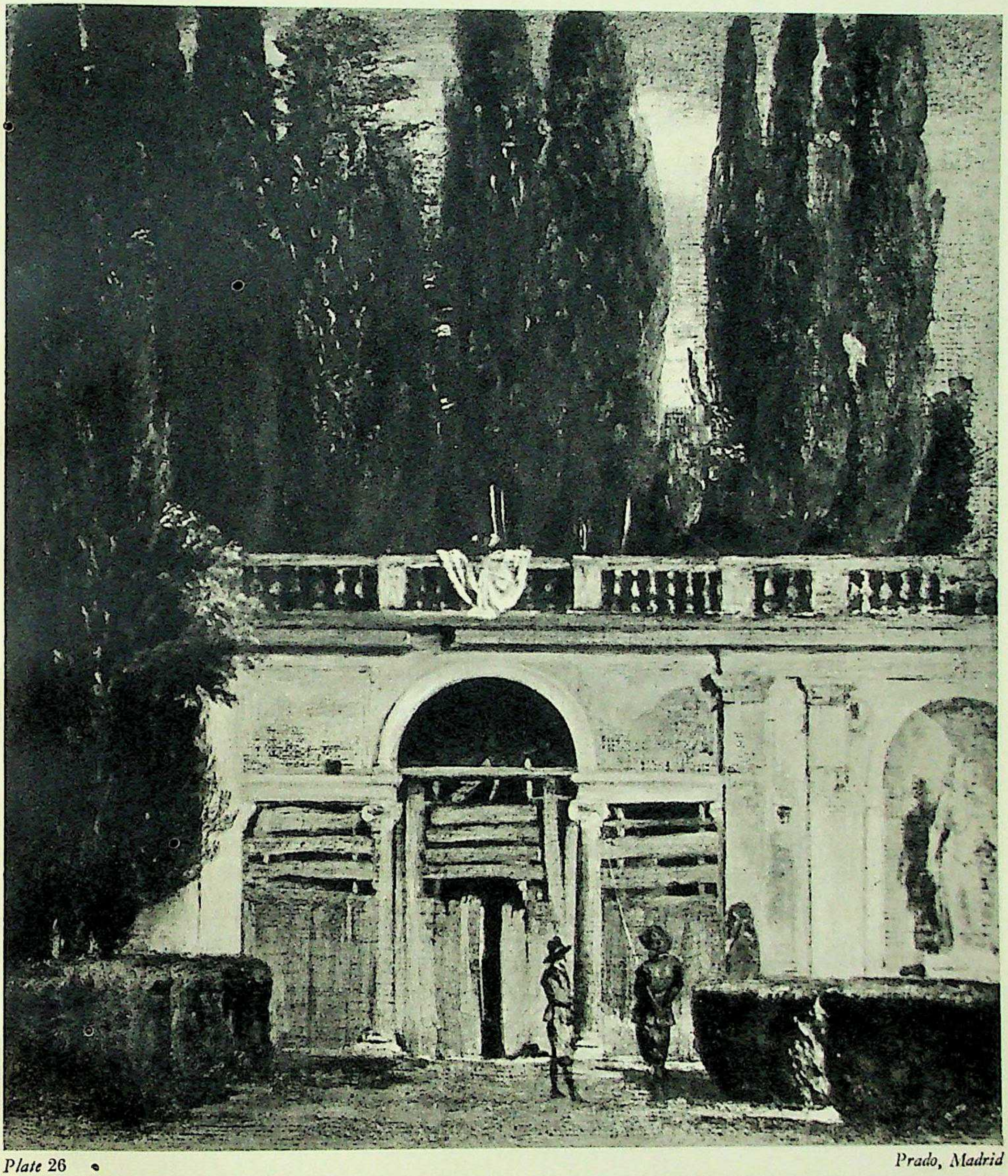

Plate 26

Prado, Madrid

GARDENS OF THE VILLA MEDICI *By VELAZQUEZ*

Original 19″ × 16½″

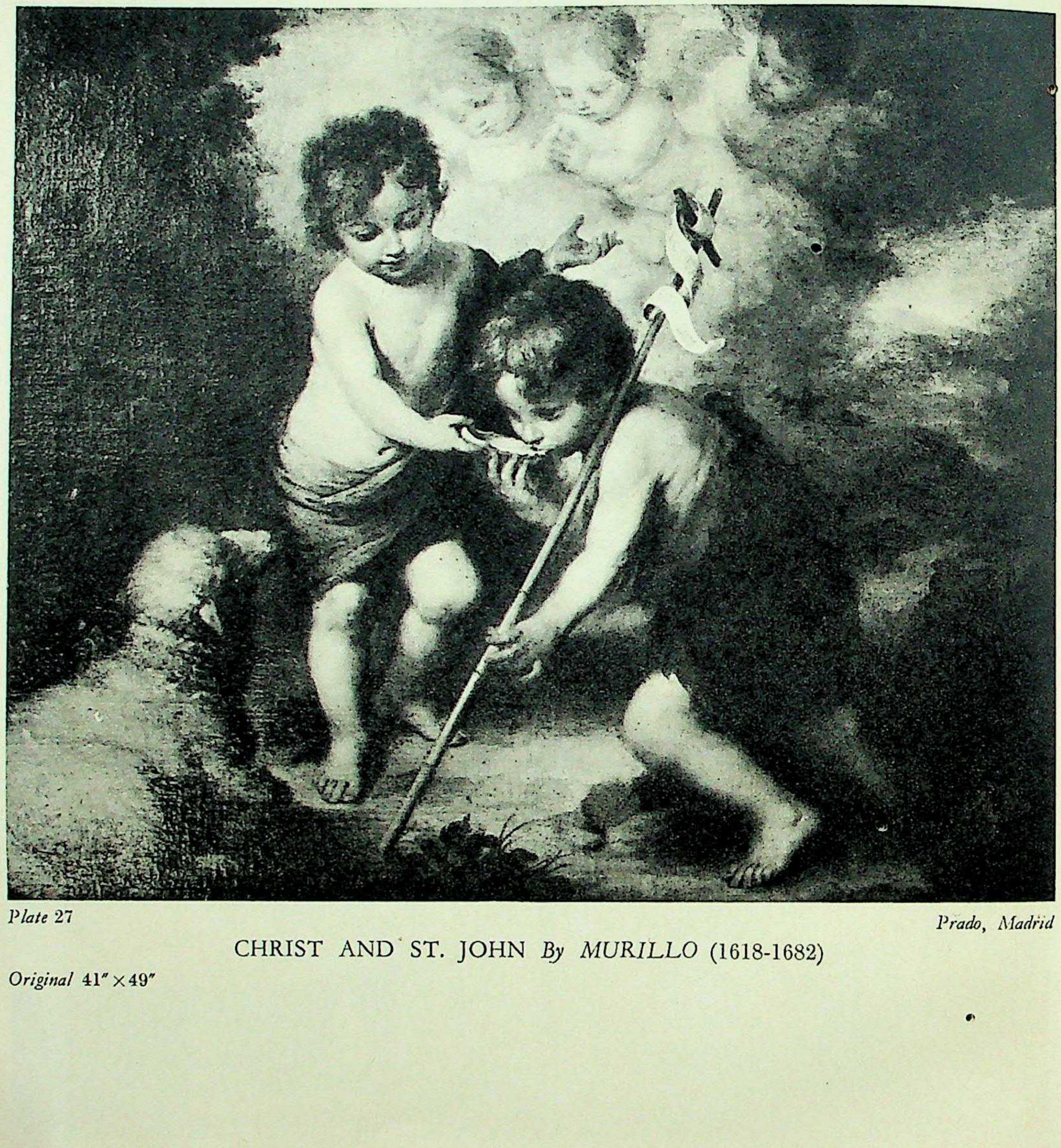

Plate 27

Prado, Madrid

CHRIST AND ST. JOHN *By MURILLO* (1618-1682)

Original 41″ × 49″

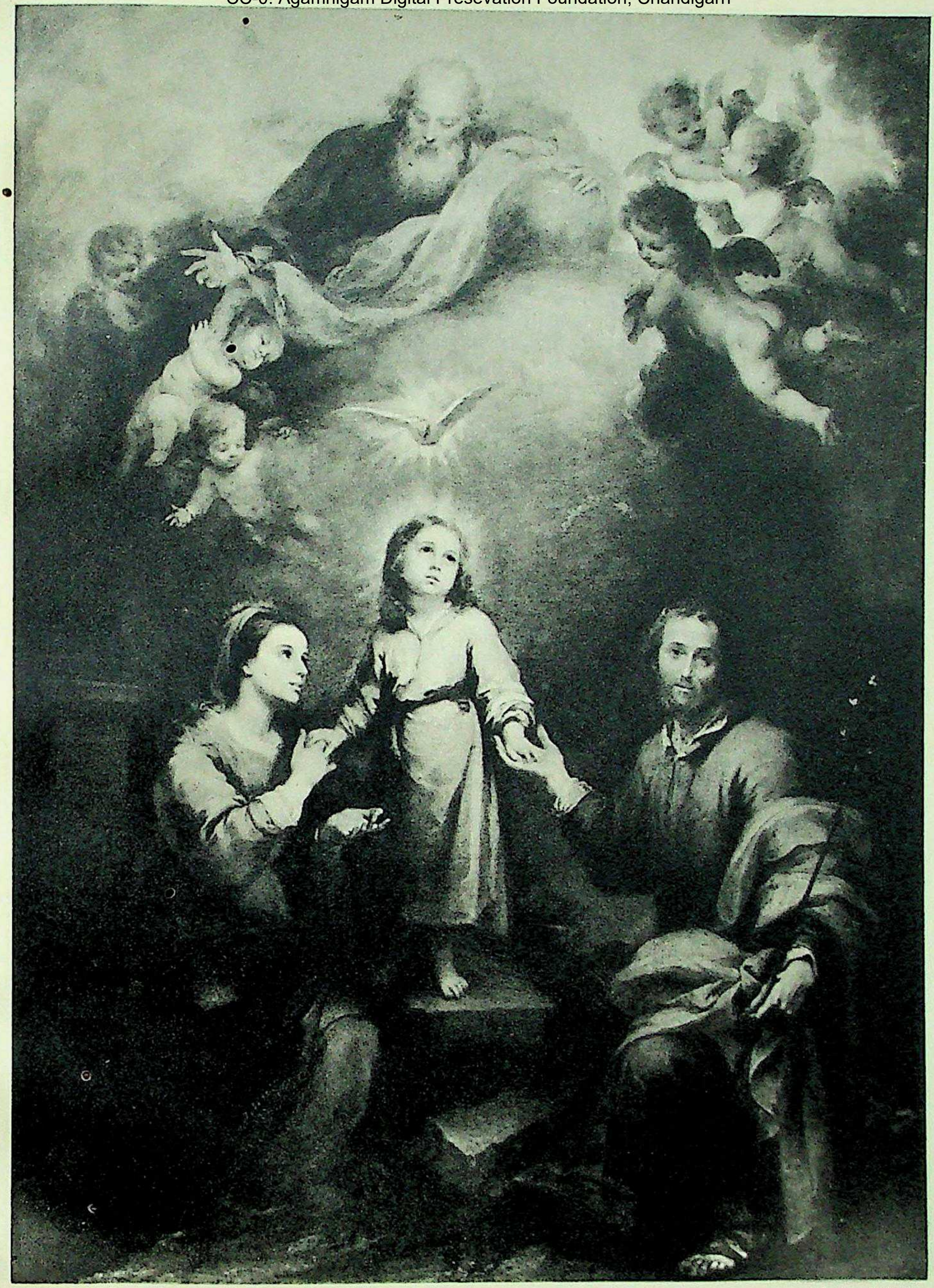

Plate 28 National Gallery

THE HOLY FAMILY *By MURILLO*

Original 114" × 82"

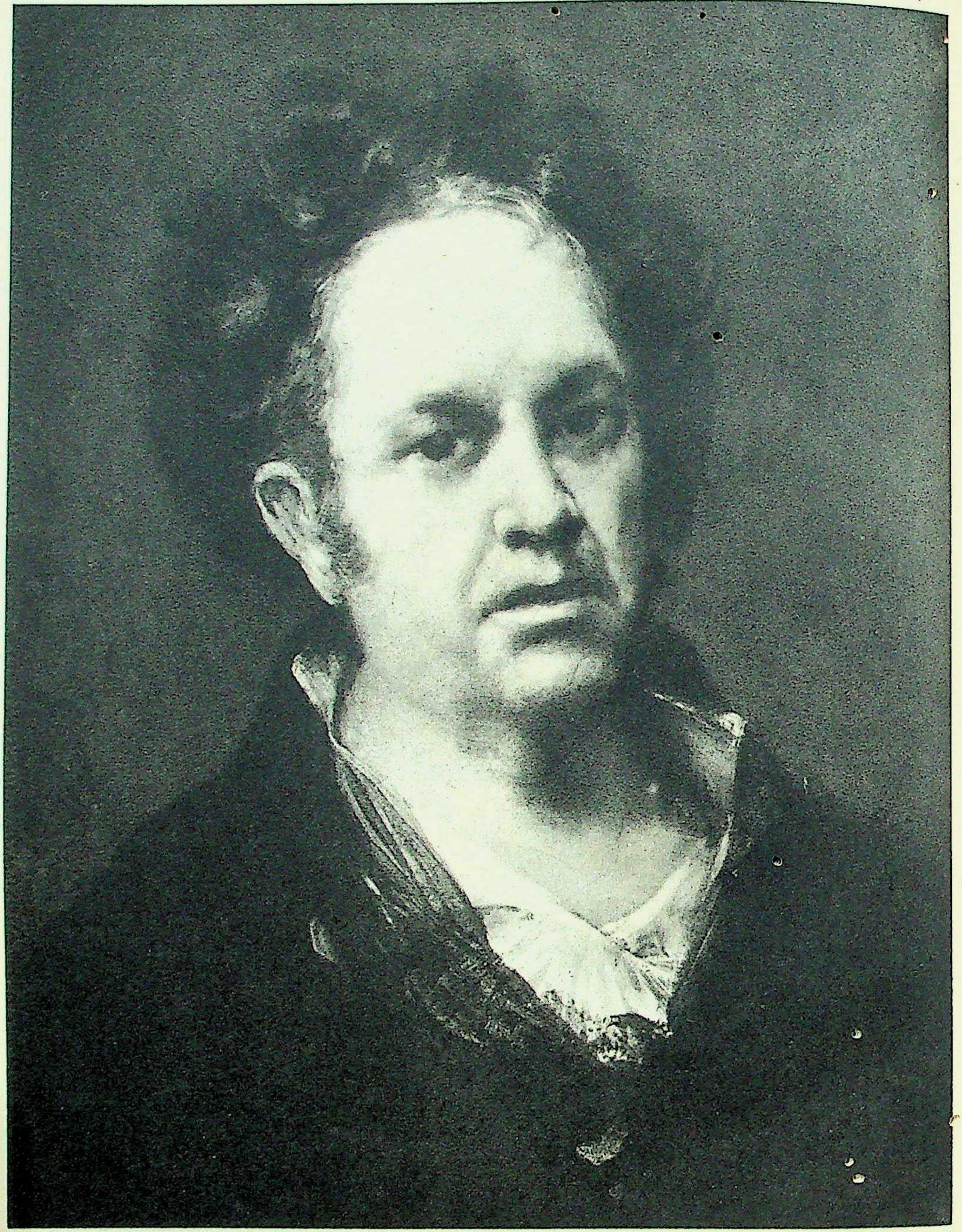

Plate 29 *Prado, Madrid*

SELF-PORTRAIT *By GOYA* (1746-1828)

Original 18″ × 13¾″

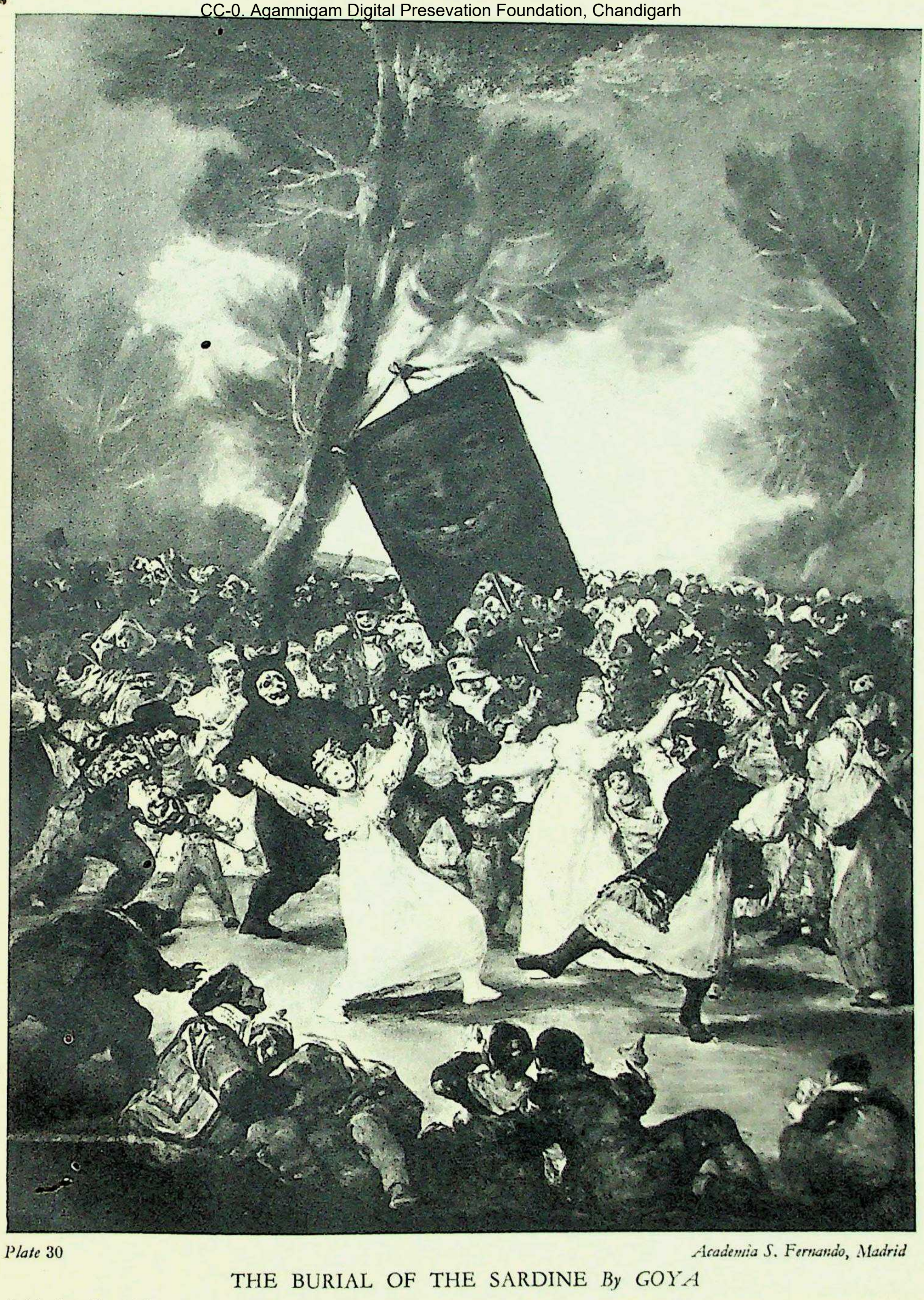

Plate 30 Academia S. Fernando, Madrid

THE BURIAL OF THE SARDINE *By GOYA*

Original 32¼″ × 23½″

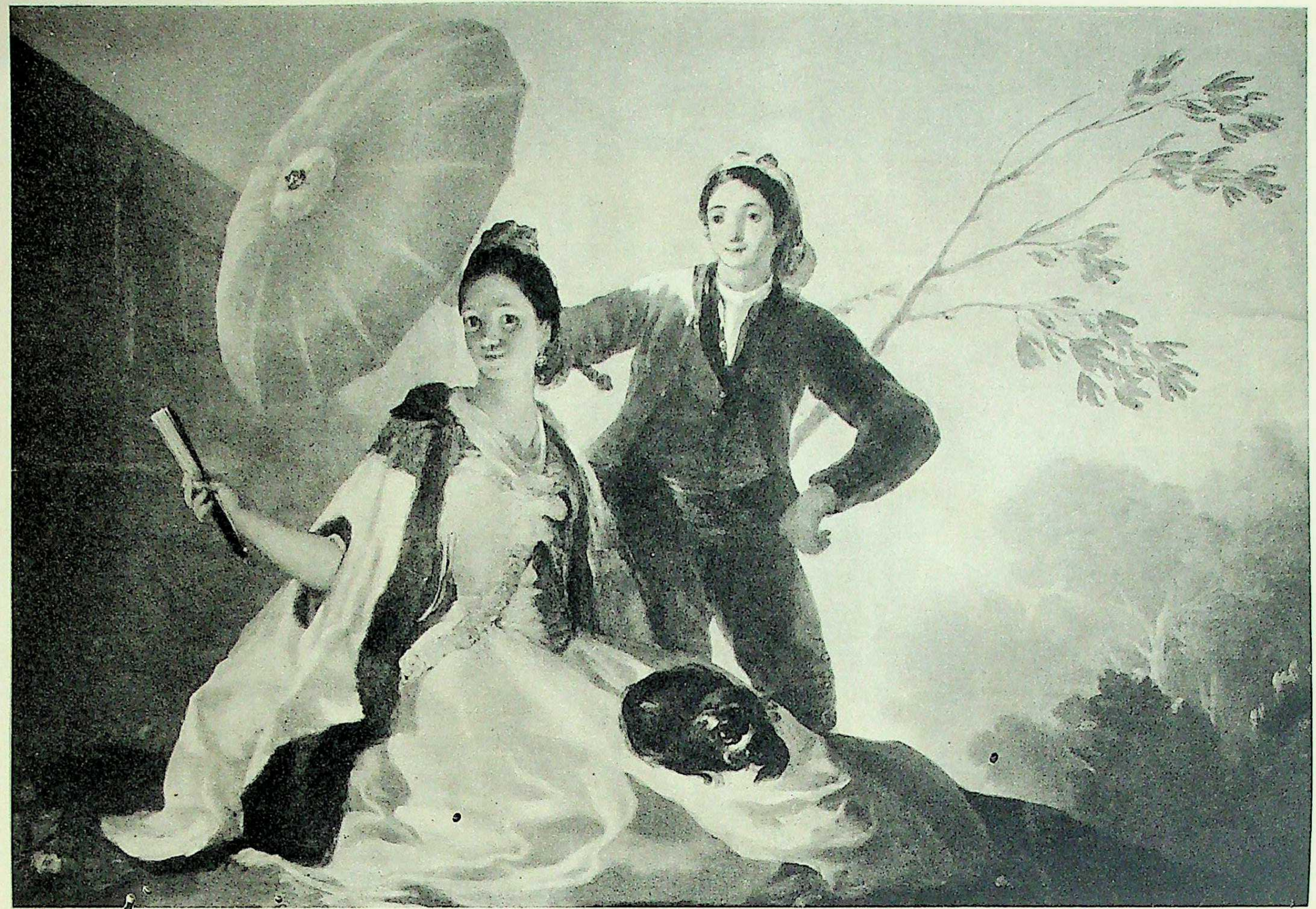

Plate 31

Prado, Madrid

THE PARASOL *By GOYA*

Original 41″ × 60″

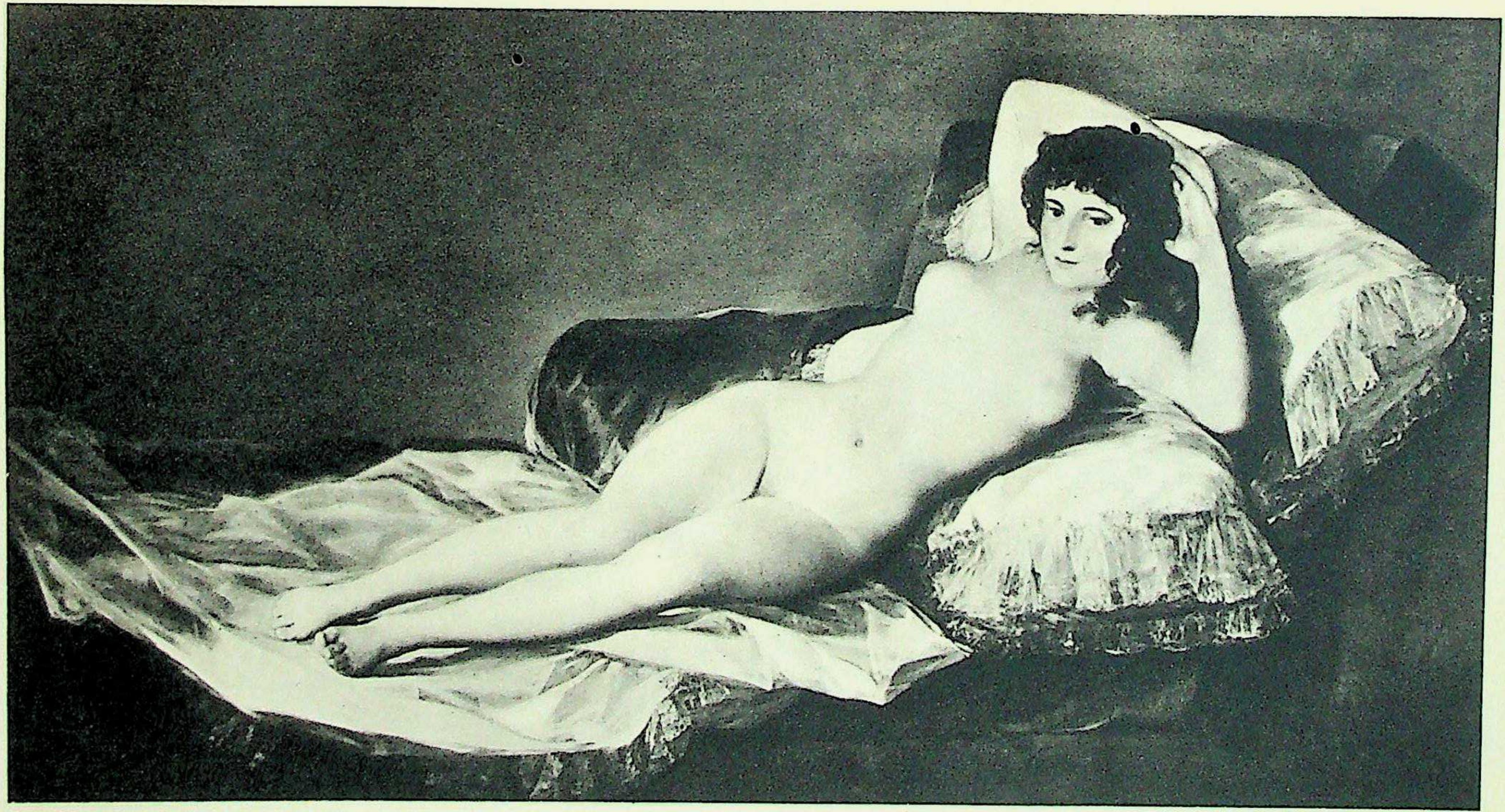

Plate 32 *Prado, Madrid*

THE NUDE MAJA *By GOYA*

Original 37½″ × 74¾″

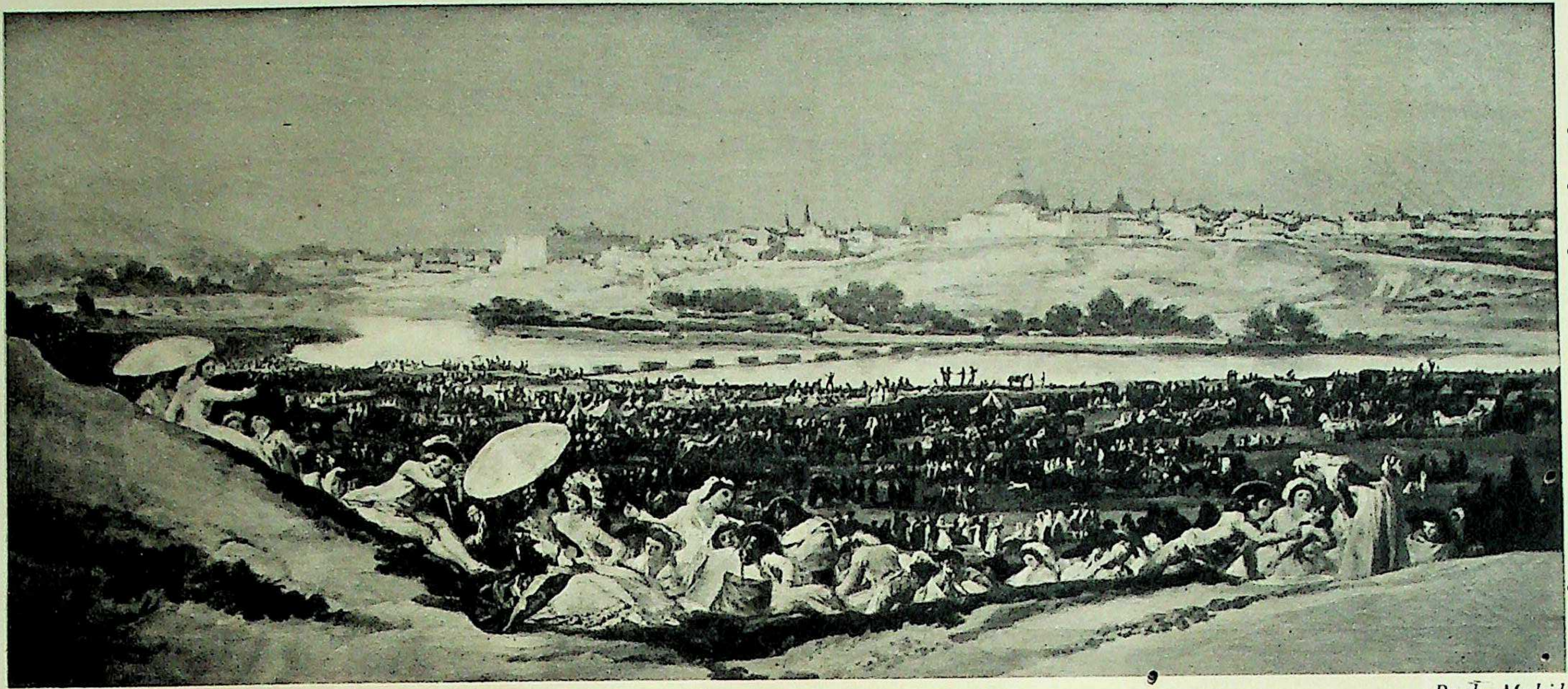

Plate 33

Prado, Madrid

THE FETE OF SAN ISIDRO *By GOYA*

Original 17¼″ × 37″

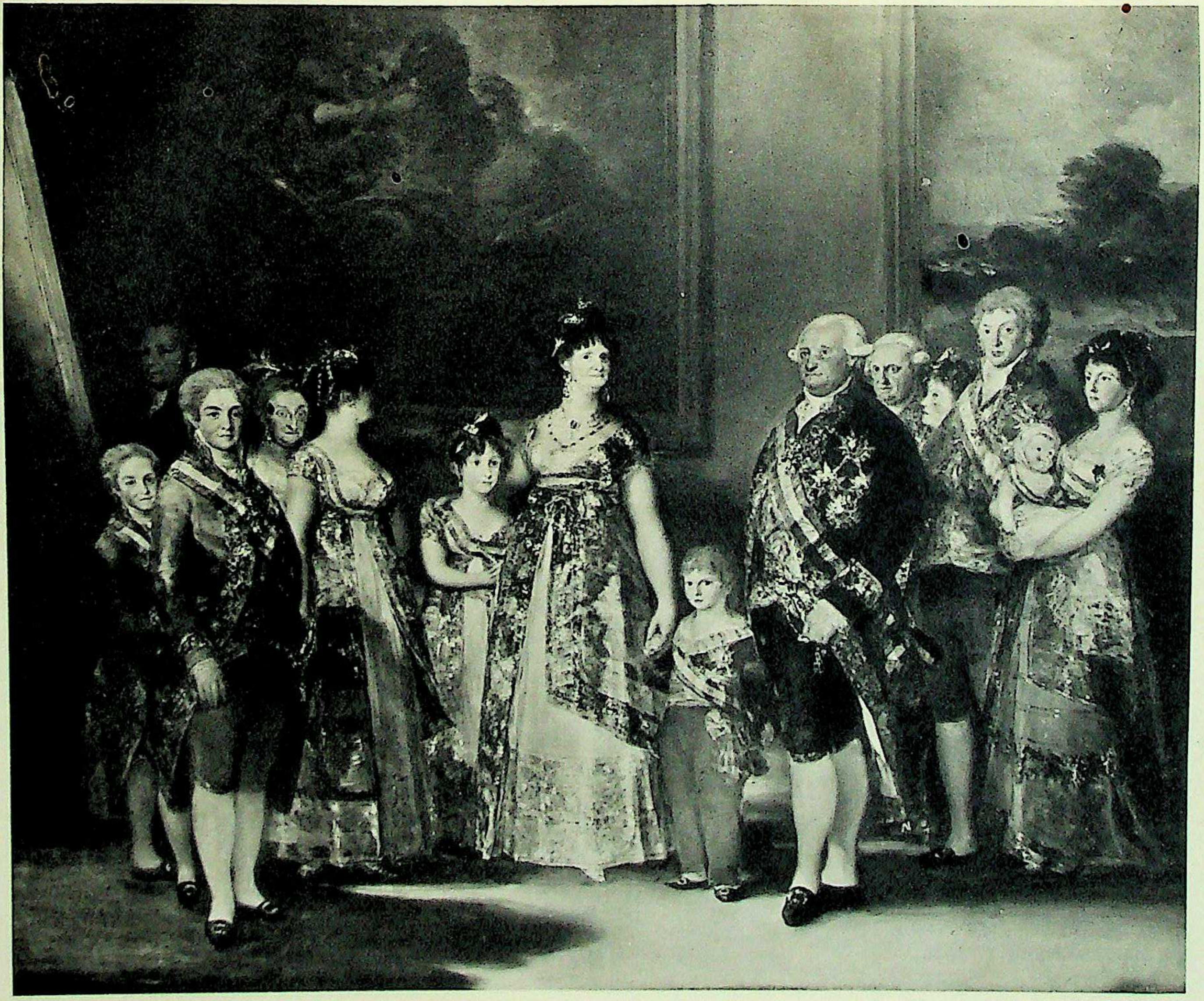

Plate 34

Prado, Madrid

KING CHARLES IV AND HIS FAMILY *By* *GOYA*

Original 26¾″ × 40½″

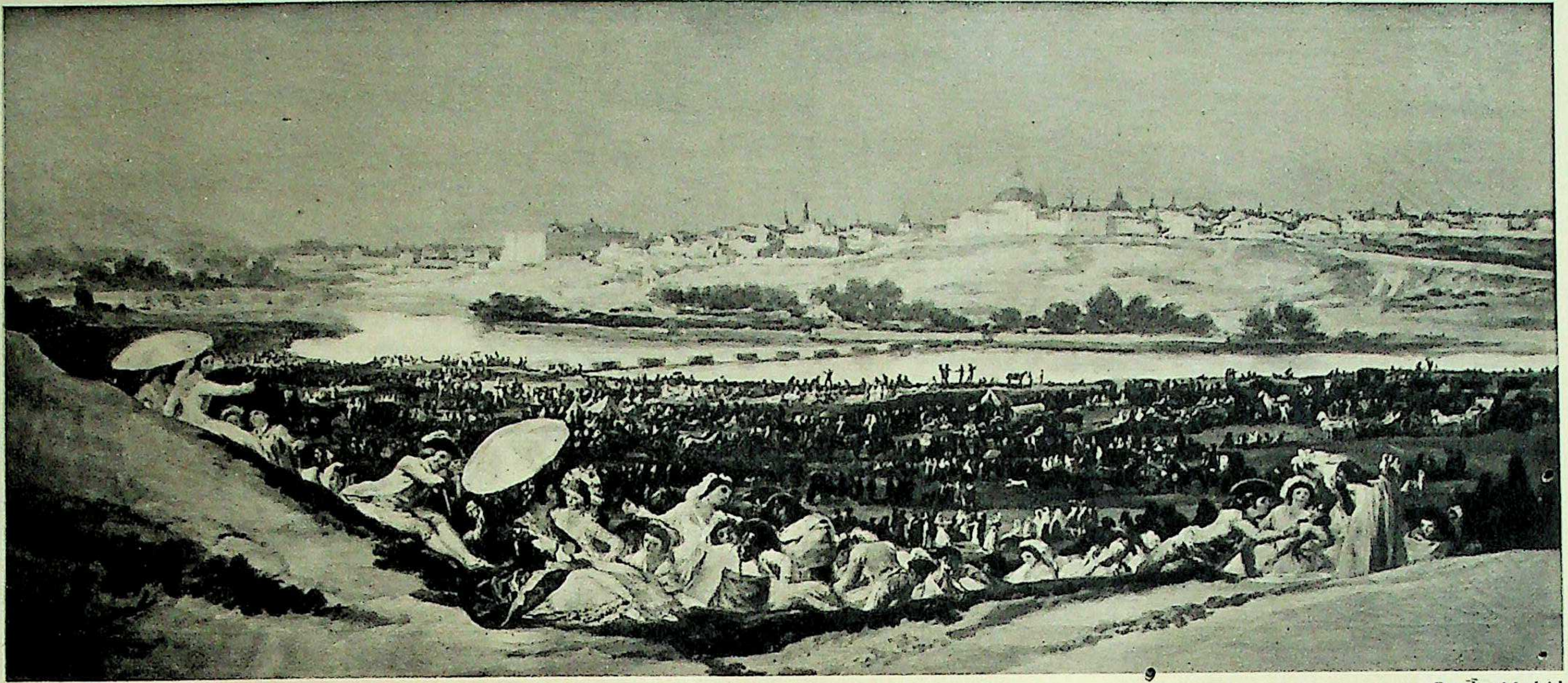

Plate 33

Prado, Madrid

THE FETE OF SAN ISIDRO *By GOYA*

Original 17¼″ × 37″

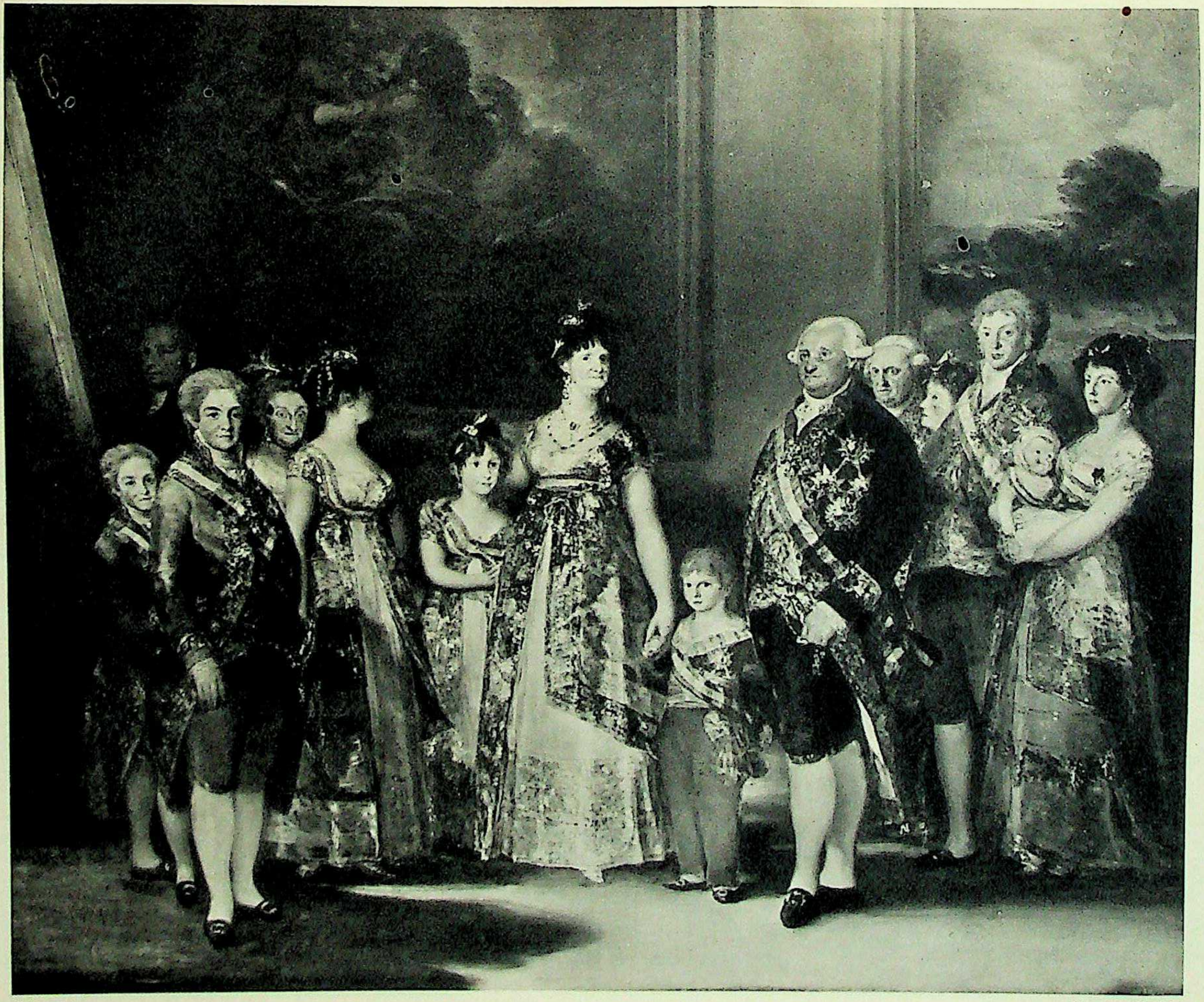

Plate 34

Prado, Madrid

KING CHARLES IV AND HIS FAMILY *By* GOYA

Original 26¾″ × 40½″

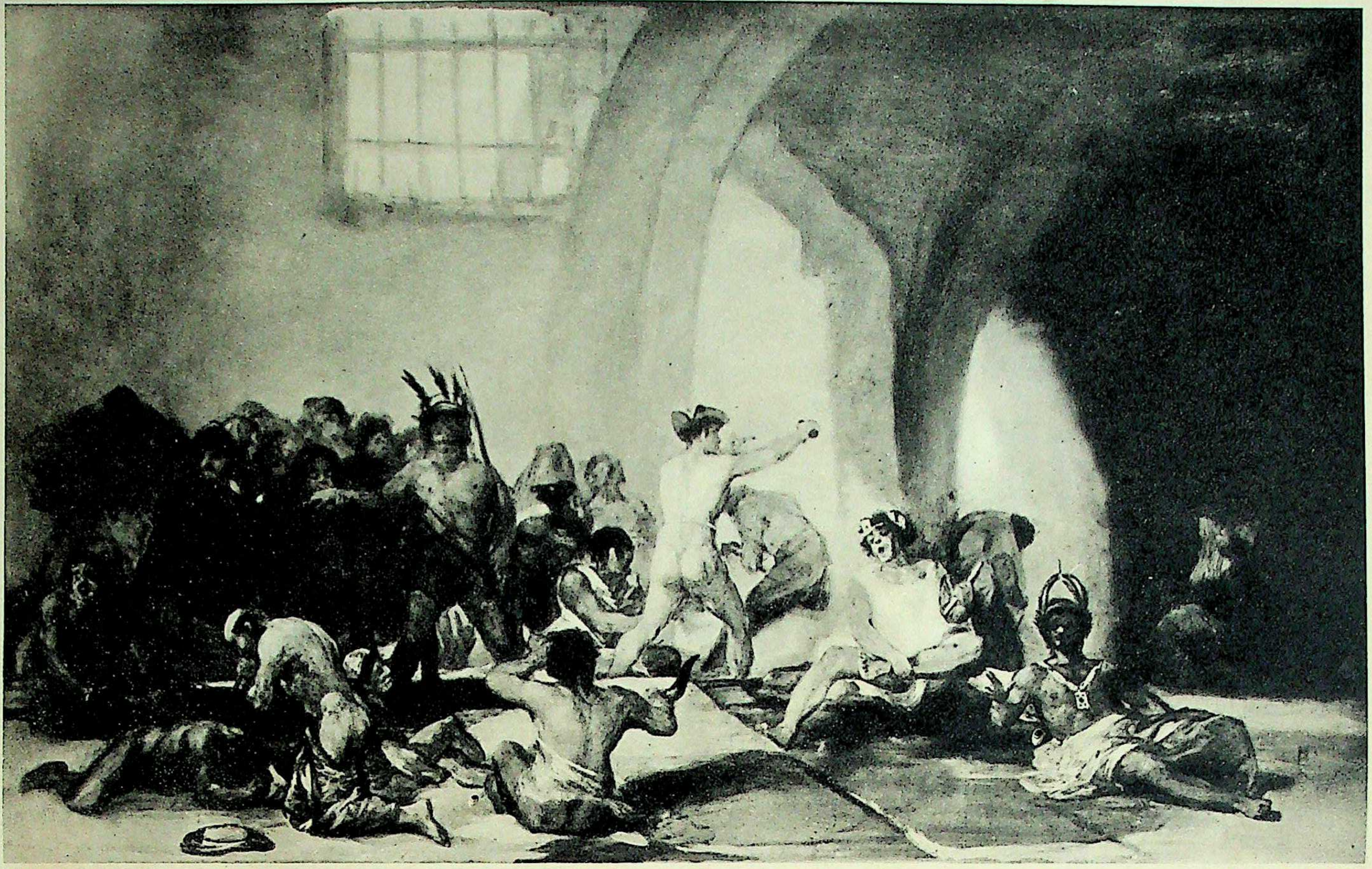

Plate 35

Academia S. Fernando, Madrid

INTERIOR OF A MADHOUSE *By* *GOYA*

Original 17¾" × 28¼"

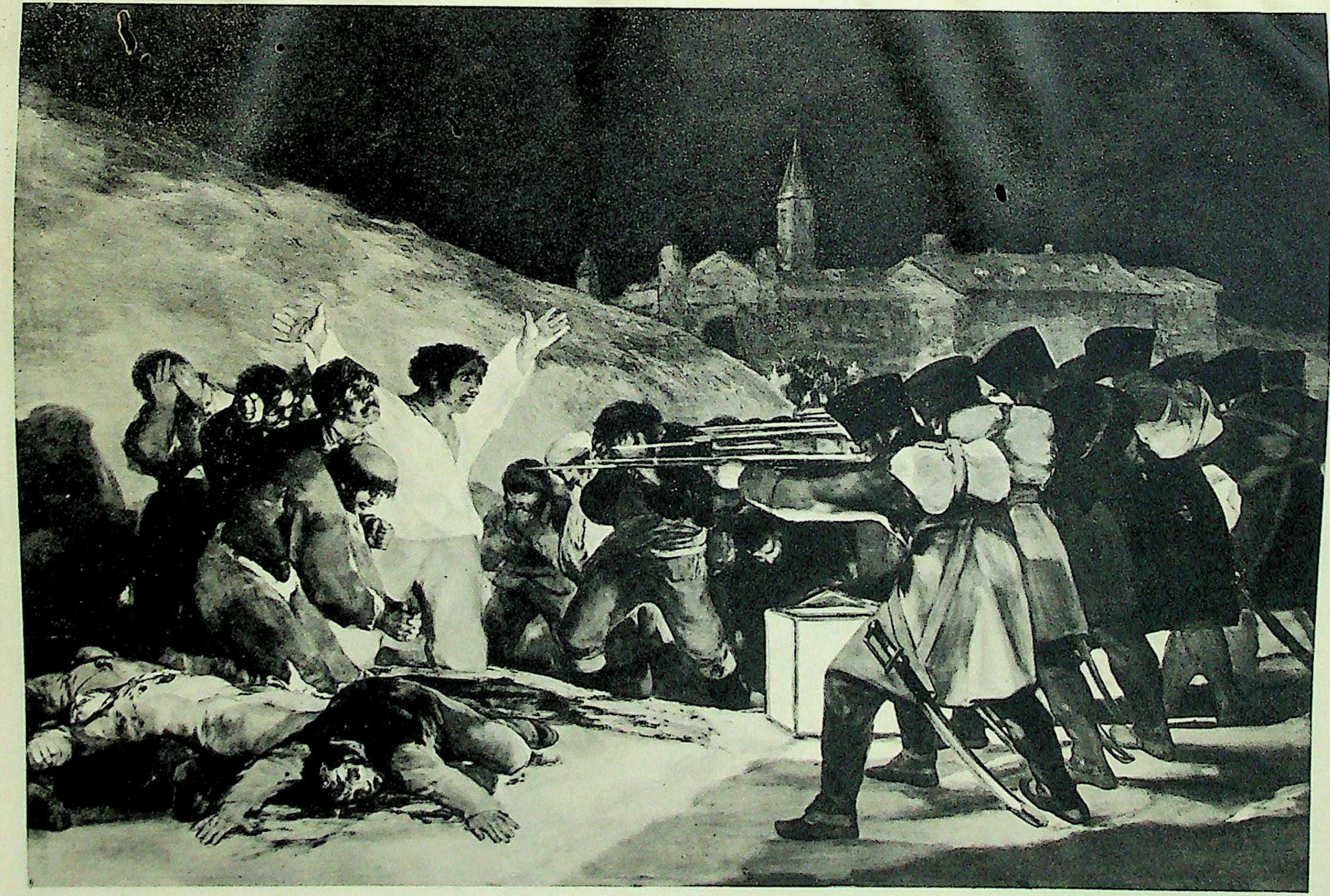

Plate 36

Prado, Madrid

THE THIRD OF MAY 1808 *By* GOYA

Original 104¾″ × 210¾″

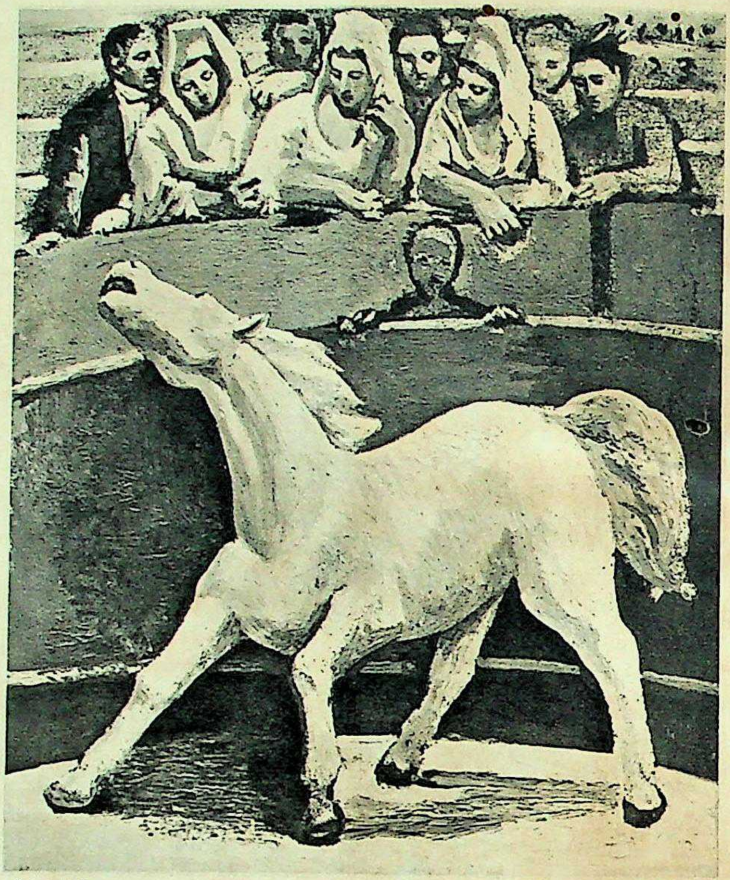

Plate 37 *Rosenberg Collection*

CORRIDA. 1923

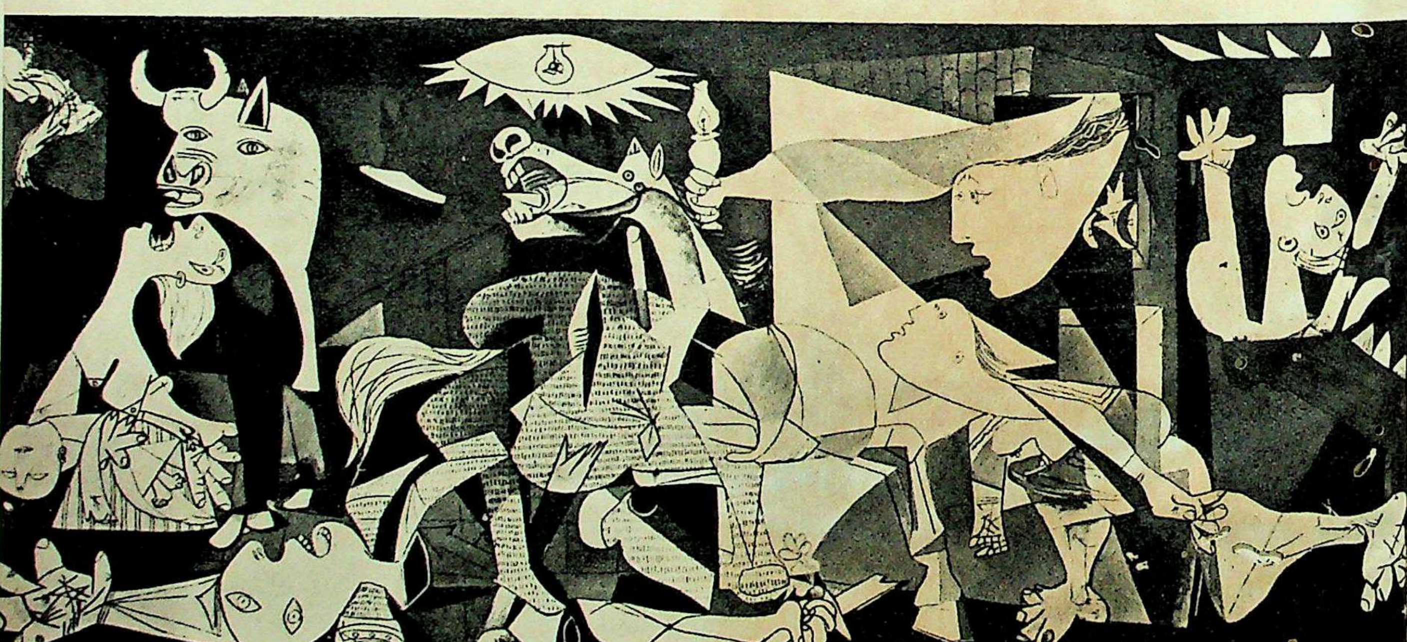

Plate 38 *New York*

GUERNICA. 1937

Original 11′ 6″ × 25′ 8″